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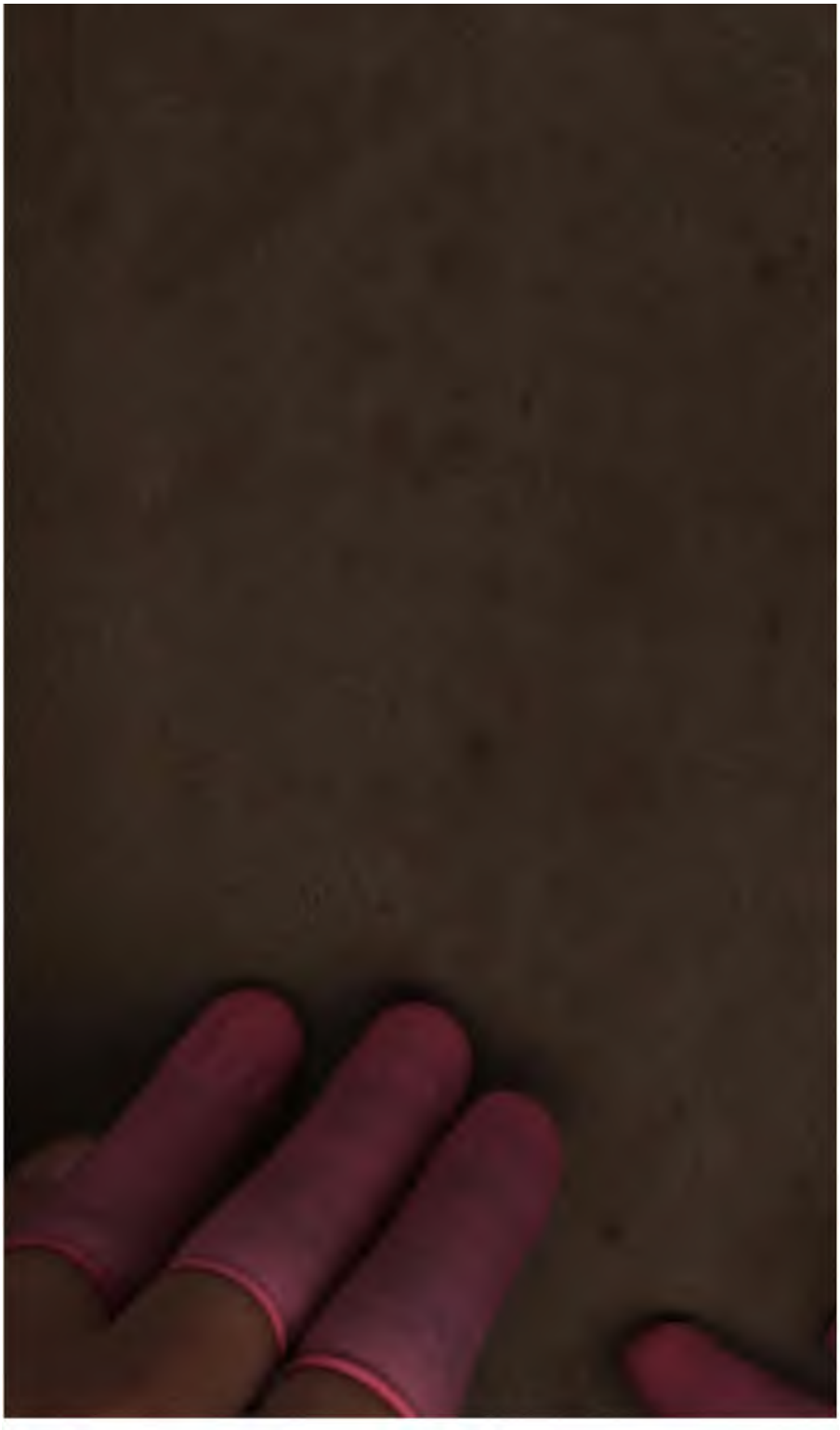
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A Map
OF THE
EASTERN PART of GERMANY
according to the
new Political divisions
arranged at the
CONGRESS of VIENNA.

AN

AUTUMN

NEAR

THE RHINE;

OR,

SKETCHES OF COURTS, SOCIETY, SCENERY, &c.

IN

SOME OF THE GERMAN STATES

BORDERING ON THE RHINE.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.
1818.

LETTER I.

MAYENCE.

On emerging from the mountainous scenes, through which the *Route Napoleon* had followed the brink of the Rhine as far as Bingen, we entered the vast rich plain, here and there diversified by undulating hills, which stretches nearly as far as the eye can reach. As I shall probably revisit the banks of the Rhine on my return, you shall then hear some description of their beauties, which may comparatively be said to cease at Bingen. Our road now lay through cheerful, stiff, avenues of fruit-trees. The hills of the Rhingau rose in a fine amphitheatre on the opposite side of the river; and the ripe harvest, which the peasants were just beginning to cut, gave an air of fertility to the flat uninclosed

district. We stopped at Ingelheim, a neat little borough governed by a burgomaster, whom we had the honour of meeting on a visit at the inn, where his dignity was acknowledged by the fair hostess and her fat spouse, with a profusion of "*Herr burgomeisters*," and ceremonious civilities, of which, Title — whether first or fourth rate — is never defrauded in Germany. Ingelheim was one of the many residences — an Irishman would say birth-places — of Charlemagne; for *some* traditions give it, in common with almost as many towns as claimed to be the cradles of the great Poet, the latter as well as the former honour; and *all* decorate a splendid palace which the grim Sovereign built here, with a hundred columns brought from Ravenna and Rome. This palace, of which some slight remains are still standing, was the scene of the well-known romantic amours of the monarch's fair daughter Bertha with Eginard his secretary.

The Gothic towers and belfries of the old Ecclesiastical Capital rose before us with a gloomy state across the plain, as we approached; but on entering it, the draw-

bridge, the ditches, the sentinels and examinings of passports, reminded one of the military reign which has succeeded to that of the church. The old city is large, rambling, and irregular; the streets generally lofty, narrow, and dirty, with the exception of the Grosse Bleiche, or Great Bleaching Place, a handsome wide street, running from the upper part of the town towards the Rhine, terminating in a cheerful *Place* planted with trees. In spite of its general darkness and dirt, Mayence has an imposing character of decayed consequence. For the *cidevant* second Ecclesiastical City in Europe, it has few remnants of striking splendour; but its old Cathedral, shattered by the balls of the famous siege, its large churches, and desolate red Palace on the Rhine excite an interest in their decay. Stately houses half-inhabited, or occupied by chandlers' shops — handsome public buildings converted into dirty *Casernes* and reeking *Cafés* — here and there a heap of ruins untouched since the bombardment, or a public square presenting forlorn chasms, remind one of the better days of the city, and

of the calamities which have reduced it to its present state, not of tranquil but bustling decay. Doctor Moore, when he visited Mayence thirty years ago, remarked the elegant Abbés with their handsome equipages, and the well-behaved troops who appeared kept under by the Ecclesiastics. The Chapter and the Grenadiers have now changed places. You see the meagre occupants of the pillaged stalls skulking to Mass in threadbare *soutanes*, their looks proclaiming them no longer the monopolizers of the old Hock of the neighbourhood; while the Austrian and Prussian Soldiers, to the number of 14,000, are rioting in the insolence of lawless superiority. The cafés, the billiard-rooms, the promenades are crammed with these smoking and swaggering guests, come to give a sort of unhallowed vivacity to the mouldering haunts of the Monks. The University Building is a Barracks, and Hospitals and Guard-rooms strike one at every corner. The Bishop of Mayence, appointed by the Pope and subject to the Grand Duke of Hesse, is a poor Prelate of little consequence, rarely residing in his See; where

the Governor and Generals rule supreme. The majority of the troops are now lodged in Barracks, to the great relief of the inhabitants, who are, notwithstanding, discontented with their guests. The Austrians are too stupid, and the Prussians too *mechans* and too proud: the former are preferred — but the fault found with both is — that they have no money to spend. When you hint at the past times of the French troops, the countenance of the townsman often brightens: "Ah! that was a different thing. I don't know how it was — bread was half its present price — there were as many *florins* spent then as *kreutzers* now" — "*Sacre Dieu, ces diables avoient toujours de l'argent*" — said a poor fellow, whose appearance was quite in keeping with his dissatisfaction. A keen, ragged, barber, who performed the functions of Sacristan, was much fonder of entertaining us with the grievances of the town's people, than the history of the Virgins and Saints in a Church he showed us. He was transported to find a sympathizing listener. His story was the same: the French knew how to spend their money — but these Austrians

were brutes — they bought nothing but beer and tobacco — and the Prussians were such *faquins* and so proud there was no speaking to them without the chance of being knocked down; and then he would launch into abuse of the latter, and ridicule of the former, in phraseology not the most seemly, and conveyed in a confidential half-whisper apparently proceeding from his habitual apprehension of a Grenadier at his elbow. The Austrians and Prussians, who detest each other, were at first continually disturbing the city with their broils. The most dangerous of these, which the newspapers detailed, was however caused by an Hungarian regiment, complete barbarians, with whom it was impossible to live peaceably, and who are now removed. The animosities of the troops are now somewhat softened by habit, and military regulations. They associate pretty generally, but not very cordially. Prussian conceit and vivacity sometimes treat the *humdrum* gormandizing Austrian rather unceremoniously. A Prussian officer drinking with some Austrians, joined in toasting military exploits with some cordiality, when

an Austrian, by way of compliment, proposed the health of the battle of Waterloo, a favourite theme of Prussian pride—calling to the waiter to bring *a* bottle of Champagne and *six* glasses. The Prussian taking fire at the paltry honour intended for his achievements, bawled out with an expression of contempt, "bring me *six* bottles of Champagne and *one* glass."

The policy of dividing a large Garrison between inveterate enemies, and of separating it from the possession of the Town, may justly be questioned; but the Fortress was pitched upon as one of the centres of strength of the German Confederation, and it is found less objectionable for the military and the inhabitants to garrison it with the troops of the two principal powers than with motley contingents of the great and little States. The Grand Duke of Hesse, too, willingly takes the acquisition of the city and a fine *arrondissement* of the ancient French Department of Mont Tonnerre, subject to this drawback. On any rupture, however, between Austria and Prussia, his City is sure to become a scene of bloody struggles, and to fall into the hands of the

strongest party. Mayence and the district extending along the banks of the Rhine from Bingen to Worms, of which it is the Capital, are now under the civil government of the Grand Duke of Hesse's Council of Regency, headed by a President. The French governed the whole department by a Prefect, a Sub-Prefect, and one or two Sub-Officers; but German form employs about forty Counsellors of Regency, bailiffs, upper bailiffs, and other statesmen in detail, who pocket salaries, and clog the movements of government. The people of the Province, are in general, however, contented with their new Sovereign; and the citizens would be more so if they were not incommoded by the troops; but town's people and rustics, all look back to the mild rule of the Ecclesiastical Princes, as to bright days almost forgotten in the changing calamities which have succeeded them. "*Parbleu, alors nous étions bien,*" exclaimed a dirty *désœuvré* citizen, whose drawling Germanized French showed that he had belonged to the old *régime.* The liberal government of the Grand Duke, however, which has wisely left the Courts of Justice,

trial by jury, the Code Napoleon, and other French improvements on the footing he found them with slight modifications, gives pretty general satisfaction. The inhabitants of Mayence, and the whole Province, are of course chiefly Catholics; but though now subject to a Protestant Prince, they have nothing to complain of on the score of religion — they are as well off as under the French. — Their religion is no longer an aristocratical and splendid one — the days of luxurious Chapters are gone by — but they have the freest toleration and every privilege of Protestants — their pastors and schools are upon an equal footing. In short, the new Hessians on this side the Rhine are so well contented with their condition, that they have refused to sign the general Address to the Diet for the restoration of the States — asserting that they have every reason to hope for what is just from a Prince who has shown himself so liberally disposed towards them. This is the conduct, however, of green politicians, who have not yet learnt to appreciate security for the future as well as present comfort.

The massy red stone Towers and pinnacles of the Cathedral are venerable objects in a dirty wretched square in the centre of the town, filled with the barrows and baskets of a littering market, and thronged with passengers of all qualities. The meanness of the lower ranks, the white Austrian, and the blue Prussian, uniforms, here and there a prowling *gendarme*, are, however, the predominant features. The Cathedral has nothing very striking in its architecture beyond a heavy massive grandeur; and after the superb Gothic edifices of the Netherlands it is by no means remarkable. It contains some interesting and handsome monuments of the Electors, in whose arms the old Sacristan begged us to remark the wheel taken from the first Elector, who exercised the profession of a wheel-wright. Besides Albert of Brandenburg and other men of celebrity, Fastrada, the wife of Charlemagne, is buried here, and honoured by an inscription, which I was not linguist enough to decypher. We did not omit paying due respect to the small stone erected to Henry Frauenlob, *Anglice*, "*Praise the Ladies*," the old Minnesinger and Canon, whose

surname vouches for the gallantry of his poems. The fair Ladies of Mayence showed their appreciation of their Bard by bearing him to his Grave, and inundating his bier with tears and red wine.

You know the celebrity which Mayence has acquired by the invention of Printing. The scite of Gutenberg's, the Printer's house, is now not unappropriately occupied by the Casino and the *Cabinet de Lecture*, while Faust's is degraded into a low inn. Just at the invention of Printing broke out the terrible war for the Electorate between Didier of Isenbourg and Adolphus of Nassau. The printers were obliged, among others, to emigrate, and this helped to spread the infant art among the cities of Germany.

LETTER II.

We crossed the Rhine by the fine bridge of boats from Mayence to Cassel, a small but fortified place, where neat new houses are starting from the black ruins of the last bombardment. The Rhine has here a majestic appearance: it is at least half a mile broad, and its stately bed lies before the eye for a considerable reach each way. Opposite Mayence, the Main unites its tranquil stream, which any where but by the side of the Rhine would be a noble river. Both sides of the Rhine are now once more German; but it is not till you have passed the river that you begin to feel yourself fairly in Germany. As far as Mayence, francs and Napoleons are more in circulation than the German money; but the toll is demanded on the opposite side in *kreutzers*, a little coin, sixty of which make a florin. At Mayence you find French

cafés, French restaurateurs, and are pestered with the little blackguard *commissaires* whose manifold resources of activity seem exclusively of French growth. Every body at Mayence speaks French, bad or good; at Cassel, only here and there an individual; and after passing the Main at Kostheim, you would be puzzled to find one in a hundred who could answer the simplest question.

It is difficult to describe the change of character which many features of the scene present on arriving on the right bank. You appear in another world, as you touch the commencement of the sandy plains which seem to assure you, you are really in Germany. The boat in which you pass the Main on the road to Darmstadt, affords specimens of that stillness and slowness with which every thing here is transacted. One quarter of an hour is occupied in expectation of its arrival from the opposite side; another in passing a river about half as wide and rapid as the Thames at Windsor. Your postilion drives in. You are punted across by three or four heavy boatmen, without the exchange of a syllable. The

fare is fixed—no more is demanded; you pay it, and receive neither thanks nor murmurs. The postilion cracks his whip; his horses blunder their own way out; while he draws forth the fungus and flint, with which a German pocket is always supplied, and lights his pipe to beguile the seven leagues journey, through a sea of sand to Darmstadt. The country, in spite of its soil, is cultivated and moderately fertile, rich in orchards, the roads lined with luxuriant fruit-trees. The peasants were at plough in their quaint cocked hats and blue jerkins, and the women quite as industriously employed without the same advantage of shoes and stockings—luxuries with which the German housewives dispense in summer, though neat in their appearance, and with few symptoms of poverty. We were now again in the Grand Duchy of Hesse, announced by the Hessian Lion on the posts of the *Chaussée Geld* (Turnpike) houses, having entered the Duchy of Nassau at Cassel, and quitted it on passing the Main, the boundary between the two Principalities. About two leagues from Darmstadt, we entered a

noble forest of firs, which continues nearly to the town. A wide straight avenue leads for a league through the forest to this handsome little capital. The main street, three-quarters of a mile long, and handsomely built, is a continuation of the avenue, the *façade* of the Grand Duke's Castle, finishing handsomely the long stately vista. The town is pleasantly situated on the great high road from Frankfort to Basle, in a flat country, relieved by the view of the Bergstrasse mountains at a few leagues' distance. The handsome white buildings, the neat lodges of the *corps-de-garde*, the avenues, the noble Exercise Place, the well-appointed troops, announce the importance of the residence of a little court. The metropolis of a little sovereign of Germany, which is generally much less than an English provincial town, has a curious mixture of splendour and insignificance, a sort of miniature elegance which is perfectly novel to an Englishman. There is nothing in England that resembles them. Our cities are more antique, handsome, and gloomy, our little towns more mean and vulgar — a neat watering place, with its re-

gular buildings, its absence of the bustle of trade, and its quiet gentility, will perhaps best bear a comparison. The resemblance may be pushed to the inhabitants, in one single particular — a sort of straitened elegance and economical show in the manner of life, which you generally find among persons of better family than fortune. The town of Darmstadt has increased rapidly with its Master's consequence. The Capital of the old Landgraviate of Hesse was a collection of shabby streets at the back of the Palace, as old-fashioned and insignificant as the title and territory, now forming a dirty *fauxbourg* to the smart modern town which has grown up since the territory has been doubled, and the humble Landgraviate has started into a Grand Duchy. The little Capital has thus like its greater prototypes its Court End and its City. The Palace, a remnant of the humble Landgraviate, has only the merit of being a little more respectable than that of St. James's. If it had been completed on the plan in which two sides were finished by the Grand Duke's grandfather eighty years ago, and the magnificence of which excited a satirical remark of the Emperor Joseph, it

would have been commodious and splendid; but Bellona found other employment for the Landgrave's revenues, and the Court at present reside in a part of the dark, dirty, ancient building without much splendour or comfort, while the fragment of the new Palace is appropriated to the Court Library, the Museums, &c. and forms a showy face to the old one.

Hospitality is a praise eminently due to a German Court; and this is no contemptible one, considering that it is costly, and their revenues are by no means enormous. The Court entertainments at Darmstadt are principally dinners, to which invitations are issued pretty lavishly; Sunday, being a grand day, when the table is more than ordinarily crowded and splendid. The guests assemble at the old fashioned hour of two o'clock, in the large receiving Saloons of the Palace. The Grand Duchess enters, and after half an hour occupied by her progress around the circle, strewing politenesses as she goes, the exchange of affectionate kisses of greeting, between the members of the Reigning Family, and of civil speeches between the company, the party file off, arm in arm, with

much ceremony to the large dreary dinner Saloon, where they take their seats in the order of the procession, the Grand Duchess and Court occupying the centre of the table. The system of a German Dinner, the same at Court, and at the *Table d'hôte* of an Inn—bating the additional plate and delicacies of the former—would have hit the taste of Justice Greedy, as admirably contrived for the undisturbed dispatch of the business of a meal. On sitting down you find the table well covered with dishes — there, merely to afford the eye a preliminary feast; an instant transports them to the side-board, from whence they are handed, one after another, ready carved to the company. In this way the knife and fork are kept, less in constant play than constant work, without awkward interruptions of politeness, by a succession of from fifteen to five-and-twenty dishes; beginning with invariable soup and *bouilli*, continued by sour ragouts, made dishes, creams, pastry, &c. summed up by the substantial roast meat. Every lady and gentleman have their decanter of light Rhenish or Burgundy before them, which they drink without ceremony; and the more

precious wines are handed round in the course of dinner. An attractive neighbour is thus the only possible diversion from the business in hand, which can happen at a German table. The Germans, in fact, dine like people who do not breakfast—a meal much out of use with them, and which rarely extends beyond a light milk roll and a cup of coffee. The desert is the conclusion of the dinner—not a systematic recommencement—it is soon dispatched, and the company rise—for the men have no politics to talk; and they prefer coffee, *liqueurs*, and the company of their ladies to toasting them in bumpers in their absence. The German Cookery is seldom *au naturel*, like the English—nor delicately sophisticated, like the French; but it is strong, and savoury—full of acids and olios—and, upon the whole, somewhat calculated for stout stomachs, and not the most delicate palates.

The Grand Duke of Hesse, now an old man, is prevented by an infirmity in his leg from taking a part in the amusements of his Court. I was, however, presented to him, and found his conversation, which he turned on the distresses of his subjects and those of neighbouring countries, owing to

the failure of the crops of 1816, rational and sensible. He is pretty generally beloved by his subjects; though here, as in greater States, a dissatisfied opposition look for the remedying of every defect to the golden accession of the Hereditary Prince. On some occasions, the Grand Duke has displayed much firmness of character. Unlike others, he has always refused promises of constitutions to his subjects, referring them to the decisions and arrangements of the Diet. In times of scarcity he has been firm in preventing monopolies and exportations of grain; he resisted the alliance with France as long as it was possible, and has often thrown off the habitual indolence of his character where emergencies have called for energy. In general, however, the good old Prince is too easily governed, too ready to let other matters take their chance, provided his orchestra play in tune, and his favourite songstress does not sing false. These grievances he does his best to obviate by a personal attendance at rehearsals, where he presides with the *bâton* of Leader of the band, beating time with an energy

which he rarely displays about other matters. An inharmonious scrape at the Opera is sure to be detected by His Royal Highness's critical ear, and the unhappy son of Orpheus never escapes a reprimand from his Sovereign behind the scenes after the Act.

Under this active superintendance of a patron and professor in the same high individual, the Opera of Darmstadt has risen to high celebrity; and though a club of gentlemen make but bad theatrical Managers in London, the Grand Duke of Hesse is one of the best in Germany. The Theatre is small, and by no means handsome; a Decree for a new and more splendid one has just passed the sign manual, to the joy of all but the peasants, who will pay without admiring. The doors of the *Grande Salle*—where files of Grenadiers and Courtiers wait to honour their Sovereign and his family with a salute as they pass—open into the beautiful English Garden, which, in the long summer Evenings affords a cool promenade to the fashionable world in the intervals between the Acts. The musical performances are exquisitely tasteful and

well managed. The *premiere chanteuse* is a pretty, interesting, woman, with a clear voice, of animating shrillness, which she wields with a voluble ease, and accompanies by an air of hilarity and sentiment, which would gain her admirers in a more extended sphere: it would be difficult to find a more scientific one. The Grand Duke, the Court, and the town, are just now rejoicing in the acquisition of Wild from Berlin, one of the first singers in Germany, whose salary is to be at least equal to that of a General Officer, and only exceeded by that of three or four of the first Dignitaries of the Court. The accessories of the little Theatre are admirable; the scenery sometimes little inferior, on a small scale, in taste, good keeping, and splendid execution, to that of Covent Garden. It is principally the work of Schönberger, one of the first Landscape Painters in Germany, the husband of Madame Marconi the singer. His scenes are better than his pictures; though the last display some genius principally in exhibiting the varied effects of sunlight upon scenery. The Germans call him their

Claude, with not half the reason that Turner has been styled the English one. The merchants of Frankfort, and the courtiers of Darmstadt, who agree about as cordially as vulgar solidity and aristocratic elegance generally do, mutually boast the pre-eminence of their respective orchestras. The judgment of impartial critics appears to be, that the performers at Darmstadt are more equal, more judiciously assorted, like the hounds of Theseus,

> " Match'd in mouth like bells each under each :"

but that the Orchestra of Frankfort contains several musicians of greater genius. In the mean time, the Barons and the Brokers mutually sneer at each other's *connoisseurship*; and " Who shall decide when doctors disagree?"

The Grand Duchess of Hesse, who has long survived the bloom of female charms, has been one of the most celebrated beauties of Germany. The pictures of her in her youth are exquisitely handsome; and her person has still some remains of grace. Her manners are affable and gay; she

has more natural vivacity than cultivation of mind. She is mistress in an eminent degree of all the amiable politenesses which acquire popularity in Court Circles, and adds to them a friendliness of disposition which gains her much affection.

I rejoiced to have an opportunity of becoming acquainted, at Darmstadt, with one of the most distinguished women, and the wife of the most popular Prince of Germany—the Grand Duchess of Saxe Weimar. She is the sister of the Grand Duke of Hesse, the friend and patron of Schiller, Wieland, Goëthe, and Herder, and the ornament of the only Court in which literature has flourished in Germany. Though one of the smallest of the German States, the character of the Prince and Princess, and of the enlightened men whom they have assembled around them, have spread the name of Weimar throughout Europe; a literary Court being no slight phenomenon in a country where the Courts are generally the antipodes of cultivation and intellectual graces. The Grand Duchess of Weimar has, however, displayed qualities which rank her much above a mere *savante*.

Owing to her undaunted influence, the Grand Duke was prevented from joining Buonaparte, in despair of the utility of any other conduct. After the battle of Jena had decided the fate of the North of Germany, when the Grand Duke was still absent with his army, the Duchess remained in Weimar. On the approach of the French, headed by Buonaparte, the poor deserted women, and inhabitants of the town flocked to the Castle for safety. The gates were opened to them, and the Grand Duchess sheltered and protected them with the kindness of a mother. On Napoleon's entry, he summoned Her Royal Highness to abandon the Castle and attend him. She refused; and an order for the pillage of the palace and town was instantly issued. The Duchess remained firm; determined, if possible, to avert this fate from her Capital. She succeeded — her dignified firmness at last induced the Emperor to wait on her in person. The interview between Napoleon and the Grand Duchess might have afforded a subject for the Historical Painter. Her noble deportment and reasonings wrought upon the Conqueror, and he

withdrew his cruel order. The Grand Duchess underwent every hardship for the accomplishment of her purpose; remaining shut up in the castle with her helpless subjects several days, almost without the bare necessaries of life. A triumph like this, of the pure power of character, over animosity, backed by physical force, is one of those rare examples which sometimes occur to tinge history with a tone of romance.

When I was presented to this excellent woman I felt a pre-disposition to respect her, which the old-fashioned dignity of her appearance, her sensible countenance, and the almost quaker-like simplicity of her dress by no means diminished. The Grand Duchess, now about sixty, has no vestiges of beauty—but her face bears the stamp of a character, decided, fixed, and perhaps somewhat severe—an expression which relaxes, in conversation, into a cheerfulness, the result at once of good humour and simplicity. Her conversation is rational rather than gay; and she appears not to possess much of what is called the *aimabilité* of society: but there is shrewd sense in what she says, and plain

sincerity in her manner, quite of a-piece with her almost rustic neatness of attire, and her erect dignity of deportment. She talked to me of English literature, with which she has considerable acquaintance, having formerly cultivated it with industry. On my mentioning that I had learned German, in London, of a Saxon, she enquired particularly for his name, &c. as if the title of a compatriot interested her, and the good old lady fell, as if involuntarily, into conversation in her own language, with a volubility that obliged me to confess, in French, my inability to keep pace with her. Surrounded by ladies, who had all the flaunty air of a modern Court, the Grand Duchess of Weimar had something of the character of a simple and respectable *Bourgeoise*. With her plain, high, mob-cap, brought down under her chin, her white handkerchief folded across her bosom, and her respectable slate-coloured silk gown, she would have formed a subject for Hans Holbein. In her conversation, however, you not only found the easy self-possession of rank, but the dignity of intellect, and an upright plainness of manner, which fastidi-

ous Courtiers called rusticity, but which to me was interesting for its harmony with the sterling qualities which have gained her the veneration of Germany.

In the suite of the Princess I found a sensible and graceful woman, the Countess ———, with whom my neighbourship at the ceremony of a German dinner, gave me an opportunity of some pleasant conversation. Her friend, Goëthe, the idol of German readers, on whom our northern critics expended so much gall, was naturally brought on the *tapis*. The poetical Baron, to the no small concern of the German *connoisseurs*, has just retired from the direction of the Court Theatre at Weimar, which his taste had raised to one of the most distinguished in Germany. Amongst various reports on the subject, some ascribed the event to the bard's pertinacious good taste, which had opposed itself to the performance of a quadruped performer who had inspired the Grand Duke with a strong curiosity to see him. This is not precisely the fact—though it is true that a clever canine Roscius, like those we have been treated with in London, who could carry a

lanthorn or knock at a door, was the cause of a misunderstanding between the poet and his master and friend. "*Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ!*" But Goëthe's years and declining health were the immediate causes of his quitting his theatrical duties; the dog was only a *gravamen*, which hastened his resignation. His peace is now made with the Court, where he dined the day before the departure of the Grand Duchess. The Countess, though a friend of the Bard, and a member of the literary *Coterie* at Weimar, appeared to me by no means his unqualified admirer. The caustic comments of our Edinburgh Reviewers have been translated into the German Journals, particularly into one at Weimar, the Editor of which owed the great Poet a grudge*; which, from all accounts, he could not have hit upon a more efficacious mode of paying with interest. Goëthe's character is one of consummate vanity, and replete with littleness. The

* I since understand that the aggrieved Bard has taken a dignified revenge in publishing a translation of the critical enactments against him, with the simple comment, "*This the English call criticism!*"

critic found the clue to many a deep recess of the poet's psychological structure; touching all his sores with his bitter applications; and the poor bard has smarted not a little under this adroit discipline. He is not, however, quite so generally pitied or defended as I expected; for Goëthe, idolized as he is in Germany, is by no means the object of the universal love inspired by Schiller. People speak of the latter with a fondness and respect as much inspired by his character as his talents. He was a good man, —a good German—simple as a child—with a noble and high-minded nature. Goëthe is the idol of a circle; but there is not a German, high or low, who did not love Schiller: so strong is the fascination of simplicity of character, united with the power of genius.

I had the satisfaction of seeing more of the Grand Duchess of Weimar at a little fête and ball, with which her illustrious hosts entertained her, at an *Orangerie* of the Grand Duke, a mile from Darmstadt. This may be taken as a fair specimen of the summer amusements with which the little Princes vary the eternal *ennui* of daily state dinners. Those who witness

the long journeys through sandy roads, to dine inconveniently at some old hunting Chateau, whose long corridors, lined with stags' horns, echo to the rarity of human footsteps, and where the Prince meets his ancestors, the old Landgraves or Margraves, on the walls, in all the state of bags, ruffles, and cobwebs, may conceive the full force of the motive which actuates these journeys after pleasure. The Gardens of Bessungen are small, and rather prettily laid out, with a summer-house in the middle, in which the Court dined; and a handsome Orangery, to which the evening assembly, intended for a *fête champêtre* in the gardens, was obliged, by unpropitious weather, to be adjourned. The Court had dined at the usual primitive hour; and the Evening visitors, who, by a pleasant abatement of state, were permitted to appear without swords or trains, were assembled by five o'clock. The Orangery, a lofty spacious building, in a garden laid out in the French taste, was decorated with ranges of orange trees and festoons of flowers on the spur of the occasion. When the company was assembled, the court arrived from the little Summer-House, where

they had dined; the Grand Duchess entering arm in arm with her illustrious Sister from Weimar, surrounded by the official ladies and gentlemen of their suites. The two Princesses then made the tour of the circle, in the ordinary style, commencing with the ladies, among whom youth and virginity often gives the privilege of a condescending kiss, while the matrons are only honoured by a few words of passing politeness. When the two Grand Duchesses had finished their arduous progress, and were seated side by side on chairs prepared for them at the upper end of the hall, Tea, Coffee, and substantial cakes were handed about in abundance. A favourite Waltz, struck up by a military band among the Orange trees at the lower end, afforded a signal for dancing, to which German beaux are never remiss in attending. After the initiatory Polonaise — a promenade, rather than a dance, in which the dowagers join, who have bid adieu to livelier exertions — waltzing commenced. In an instant the beaux were at their posts, encircling their fair partners' waists, headed by the little Duke of Anhalt Cöthen, an amiable

young Sovereign of fifteen, a grandson of the Grand Duchess of Hesse, who already shows proficiency in the first accomplishment of the German Prince and peasant. The ladies, all partaking this national passion, readily overlooked the inconvenience of a paved floor, which required toes unplagued with corns to be at all supportable; and the boots and spurs of the officers in full uniform were no impediment to grace or agility.

A pretty girl, waltzing with great gaiety, was dressed in becoming black, with an orange-coloured *cordon* slung gracefully across her breast. It was a young *Chanoinesse*, in the costume of the *Couvent des Dames Nobles* at Francfort, one of the very few of those establishments still existing. Protestant and Catholic noble ladies are here alike admitted; and enjoy, besides a yearly allowance of some hundred florins, board, lodging, and equipages, under the superintendance of an abbess. They are subject to none of the strict regulations of a religious order. They leave the convent when they like; sometimes are suffered to retain their pensions when married; sometimes

to sell their situations. These institutions, which formerly abounded in Germany, have been, with few exceptions, pillaged of their funds, and abolished, in late years, to the great disadvantage of the poor and haughty noblesse.

In the intervals of the rotatory pleasures, which the parties engaged never allow to be very long, we were regaled with fruit-cakes, punch, lemonade, *kalt schale*, or wine soup, and sour milk. These two last drinkables are very common in summer, particularly on rural occasions. *Kalt schale*, or a cold bowl, is a pleasant composition of wine, lemon, currants, &c. served up in soup plates. Sour milk bears an honest name, and is neither more nor less than milk put into a jar in a cellar till it becomes sour and curdy; a curious process, similar to that which produces sour krout. This celebrated dish is nothing more than finely sliced cabbage, pressed down in jars, sprinkled with salt and kept till fermentation gives it that putrid acidity so congenial to the German palate. The evening at Bessungen was gay and agreeable, in spite of the wretchedness of the weather, and the

coldness of the scene of action. There was less of ceremony than on the generality of Court entertainments. The Princesses, as usual, affable and conversable, were less intrenched within the barriers of etiquette than in the Saloon of the Palace; and the opportunity which I thus acquired for a further acquaintance with the Grand Duchess of Weimar was my principal resource during the evening; not having, at that time, acquired the art of whirling like a top, without being, like a top, in danger of losing the perpendicular when the motion ceased. Dancing was concluded by a Cotillon, at the end of which the old fashioned hour of nine gave the signal for the Court's departure to supper. The heavy carriages appeared at the glass door, into one of which, more than ordinarily gilt, and drawn by a pair of prancing cream coloured horses, the two Grand Duchesses stepped, after a profusion of bows, in return for the low obeisances of the assembly. The little Princes, and their cousin the young Duke, with the ladies and officers of the Court, followed in the substantial old coaches, with long tailed black horses, and the rest

of the company filed off as their carriages drove up, with less delay and damage than sometimes occur at a London *rout.*

A few days after, I was present, or—as a Frenchman says when he but sits in the gallery of the Chamber of Deputies to listen to the speeches—I *assisted*—at another rural entertainment, given by a pretty Lady of Honour of the Grand Duchess of Hesse, in the *Bosquet*, or public English Garden, one of the principal ornaments and resources of the elegant little Capital. Half the towns of consequence, in Germany, have something dignified with the appellation of an English garden — often, a little plot of ground, crammed with grotesque seats, rustic bridges over tortuous canals, and ruins and hermitages half hid in tufts of shrubs, to surprise the wanderer in a path meandering like a corkscrew. There are, however, imitations of more taste and resemblance— of this number is the garden in question, which covers forty acres of pleasing shrubbery and lawn. In a retired thicket, is the simple little urn in memory of the Landgravine, mother of the

present Grand Duke, with Frederic the Great's complimentary inscription:

"SEXU FŒMINA INGENIO VIR."

A large piece of water, which moderate *grandiloquence* might term a lake, with an island planted with luxuriant weeping willows, ornaments the gardens, and afforded the merry part of our party the juvenile amusement of aquatic excursions between the island and the main land; a diversion which delighted the little Princes. A *pont volant*, sliding on ropes, gave a securer passage to the steadier beaux and belles, and did not fail to elicit all the nautical jokes and similes which the Court beaux, who generally sparkle more in stars than in wit, could muster. The little Princes, rocking their crazy bark, set up a cry of shipwreck. The ladies screamed, and an interesting scene of laughing, scuffling, handing, splashing, and practical joking ensued, fortunately terminated by the safe landing of each ruffled belle under the auspices of her favourite beau.

After these lively out of door amusements we retired to a large summer-house,

interestingly rural rather than elegant, where cards and refreshments awaited us. Whist, Boston, and Zwingen, the last resembling loo, are the games most in vogue. The time was thus whiled away in good-humoured mirth, with the chance of losing a fortune of *Kreutzers*, till nine o'clock, when half the party, called by official duties, as usual, took their hats and shawls to be in time for the Court supper. The absence of Royalty—perhaps Sovereignty is the more correct expression—from this entertainment, added to its ease and unrestrained enjoyment: an enjoyment, not of the most lively cast to any one accustomed to society, in its more active haunts—or in what is preferable—its cordial privacy. Here it presents all the disadvantages of the *petit grand monde*—it is ceremonious and heartless, without being gay or busy—and contracted and provincial, without the charm of retirement or friendly relations. These defects are, however, much counterbalanced by the good-nature and *bonhommie* of the Germans, which to strangers is very prepossessing; and, as, at present, the average activity of character does not aspire beyond such en-

joyments, every one has an air of content and unsuspecting happiness:—"Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

A fair friend of mine used to shed many a soft tear for these pleasures whenever she found herself at her husband's beautiful country seat.

LETTER III.

The public revenues of the Grand Duke of Hesse are about 400,000*l.* per ann. — besides which he has a private fund of about 10,000*l.* per ann. chiefly arising out of estates which he has purchased, and over which he has the disposal during his life, but which become domains of the Crown on his death. His successor will have the same powers over any private property he may acquire during his reign. The little States have most of them a national debt, incurred in the necessities of the late wars. That of the Grand Duchy of Hesse is not, however, so very insignificant, the interest amounting to 80,000*l.* The Hessian Stock is just now in very good repute, at about 70 per cent. In the war it was at 40, but the good faith of the Government, which, unlike many others, both great and small, has

never stopped in all its distresses the payment of the interest, has given confidence to the public Creditor. Like many little Sovereigns, the Grand Duke is more beloved in his Capital than in the country — a popularity partly acquired by little immunities by which these Princes favour the inhabitants of their residences. The metropolitans, for instance, buy all the wood they consume from the forests of their Sovereign, at not above half the price paid by the unprivileged rustics; and any person who builds a house in the town, in conformity with the plan arranged by the Prince, has a twenty years freedom from taxes, timber for building at a cheap rate, and other facilities. Partly owing to these encouragements, but more to the accession of territory and population acquired by the Grand Duke, from Napoleon, and from the arbiters at Vienna, new buildings and streets are adding daily to his metropolis. Building is cheap and expeditious; the houses speedily start up of a rough composition of stones and mortar, overlaid with a neat coat of white plaster, roofed with slate from the mountainous banks of

the Rhine: and these flimsily constructed buildings have an air of far greater neatness and elegance than more substantial brick and tile edifices.

The peasants complain of the weight of taxes, and the excessive dearness of necessaries, occasioned by the failure of the last year's crops. And though it stands to reason that their hardships are augmented by the burthen of a large establishment of troops, and the salaries of a crowd of Privy, Finance, War, and other Counsellors, &c. who clog the heavy machine of government, and of Singers and musical Professors, who vie, in price and fame, with the great operas of Germany, you rarely hear them vent a complaint against their Prince. In the midst of a lively history of his grievances, the painting of which will sometimes a little rouse his characteristic apathy, the peasant will tell you, *oh ya*, his Prince is a *guter man*, a *recht ehrlicher mann*, (a good man, a right-honest man,) with a sort of mechanical loyalty, which is half quiescent dullness and half upright goodness of character.

The Grand Duke of Hesse was one of the last Princes who acceded to the Con-

federation with Napoleon. He hesitated, till hesitation exposed himself and his territory to imminent danger, persuaded by the counsels of an excellent Minister to attempt every possible means of effecting a counter alliance with the great German Powers. This Minister, the Baron ———, was sent to Berlin, to urge the co-operation of Prussia. Every one knows the designs of Prussia upon Hanover, in 1806, and the temporising game she played in pursuit of aggrandisement, and regardless of the interests of Germany. The Baron quitted Berlin, having arranged the basis of an alliance, guaranteed by the word of the King. A few days after, the views of Prussia changed—the King's promise was recalled—and the Grand Duke threatened by Buonaparte, and, without hope of a German alliance, was driven, like his neighbours, to attach himself to the Protector of the Rhenish Confederation. The first injunction of his new ally and master was the banishment of his Minister, whose unceasing hostility Buonaparte had reason to apprehend. The Grand Duke, who was much attached to the Baron, refused; and

even remained firm on Napoleon's threatening him with the immediate pillage of his Capital: but the Minister, unwilling to endanger the country by his presence, retired, of his own accord, with his family, and never returned, but in disguise, till the retreat of Buonaparte after the battle of Leipsic. He was then received in triumph, with rejoicings, from all ranks. The Baron's conduct was in direct hostility to his interest, as during his undaunted opposition to Buonaparte the chief part of his possessions were situated in Luxembourg, then a French province, and he daily expected to hear of their pillage or confiscation: this, however, they escaped. His conduct at this period is not the only instance of his talents, and devotion to the public service. I regretted that this upright and able man, now Grand Master of the Court, and beloved by the whole country, was absent during my stay at Darmstadt. His pretty wife was our graceful hostess at the fête champetre I described in my last.

The Grand Duke, once compelled to join the Emperor, politicly performed his

forced service with a good grace. His stipulated contingent, in the Act of the Rhenish Confederation, was 4000 men, but in the emergencies of the last campaign in Germany he brought 10,000 into the field. The Prince Emilius, his youngest son, a gay young man, of talent and spirit, commanded the troops. The Prince has something very striking in his small active figure—a keen eye, and a shrewd expression of face, little German in their character—and quite in harmony with the wit and graceful vivacity which make him the life of society. On the retreat from Russia, where his army was almost annihilated, his judgment and humanity gained him the warm affection of the troops. In the campaign of 1813, his courage and generalship received high eulogiums from Napoleon, which appear, naturally enough, to have stimulated His Highness's military zeal. In the disasters of Leipsic he still faithfully adhered to the fortunes of his leader, and, unlike the Grand Duke of Baden, the King of Wurtemburg, and others, who deserted him, the Prince Emilius suffered himself and his troops to be taken prisoners by the

Allies; alleging that, as the General of his father, he had no discretion to desert the cause for which he was fighting by his orders. In the confusion of the defeat His Highness was missing — officers were dispatched in all directions in search of him, who found him with his shattered army in safe custody of the Allies at Berlin. On the slightest committal of the Grand Duke's policy he might have been set at liberty: but he insisted on being treated strictly as a prisoner of war, till he received further orders for his conduct.

This zealous adherence has, whether justly or not, drawn upon the Prince Emilius some suspicions of Buonapartism among the violent professors of a German patriotism. It is not impossible that he may have partaken that fervour of military admiration which appears common to all the troops who have served under Napoleon. At least there is more heroism in his conduct than in that of the Kings of Bavaria, and Wurtemburg, and others, who, more eager than the Grand Duke of Hesse to sell their services for crowns, and the plunder of their weak neighbours, deserted their bene-

factor in his extremity without scruple. In reward for his services the Grand Duke of Hesse might have received from Napoleon the title of King: but he wisely contented himself with that of Grand Duke. His territories received large additions in Westphalia, and the Electorate of Hesse Cassel, disjoined from his original state. The latter he still retains; the former have been exchanged in late territorial arrangements for the fine possessions on the left bank of the Rhine. He has now about 640,000 souls under his dominion, precisely double the population of his country before the Rhenish Confederation. The Grand Duchy is now, in all respects, one of the most considerable of the smaller states of Germany. Its freedom of the press, the improvement in its government and laws, and the liberal ideas of the reigning family, add greatly to its consequence; and though it ranks in precedency immediately after the Electorate of Hesse Cassel, as ninth Power of Germany, it has, in most respects, a virtual superiority.

The Court of the Hereditary Prince occu-

pies a white handsome Palace in the *Grande Place* of the town — a large square, one side formed by this Palace, and the opposite by the handsome *Chancellerie*, the seat of the public offices — the Downing-street of the little Cabinet. The Prince is a man of an honest sedate character — simple and unpretending almost to a fault — an epitome of worthy German qualities. On a first acquaintance his simplicity might be taken for the symptom of a weak diffident character; but on a nearer observation, it is easy to discover, that the Prince has both thought and read to advantage, and observes more than he speaks. This is a character with which I have not unfrequently been agreeably surprised in Germany; where the calm flow of spirits, and the slow abstract turn of intellect, seem to keep down the *besoin de parler* which a Frenchman often feels from animal spirits, and an Englishman from activity of mind. The Prince is married to a Princess Wilhelmina of Baden, the sister of the Grand Duke of Baden, the Empress of Russia, the Ex-Queen of Sweden, &c. It is the happiest *menage* imaginable. Their little Court,

with some additional ceremony, has all the air of a well regulated easy gentleman's family. A Grand Master, an Aide de camp, two Ladies of Honour, and the Governor of the two Princes, an amiable young Swiss, compose the whole suite. The Prince superintends his own household, regulates its expenditure, and supports the necessary pomp on an income by no means ample, without incurring debts. You meet him walking with his wife and boys, quite *en particulier*, or the Princess, driving in a simple calêche, with an absence of ostentation, doubly pleasing, because it is a rare, and by no means a national quality.

The Princess, with a tall majestic figure, has not the beauty for which her sisters, the Empress of Russia and the Queen of Sweden, are renowned; but she has an expression of sweetness, and good-humoured *naîveté* in conversation, almost as attractive as beauty, and a voice of infantine softness, which gives a tone of mirth, and simplicity to all that she says. Her mild character, and graceful manners, have gained her great popularity in Germany. She has a fondness for English

literature, which she studies with much diligence; timidity alone prevents her speaking our language. Her curiosity about our manners and customs, and the interest she takes in every thing English, at once made her conversation more attractive, and oftener procured me the honour of it. The works of Lord Byron, which every day excite a stronger interest in Germany, are Her Royal Highness's chief favourites. She is in possession of two prints of the noble bard; and I was happy to have the opportunity of bringing her from England his work of perhaps the deepest interest and the boldest characteristics of genius—the last canto of Childe Harold. The language of poetry, and particularly of a style so subtle and replete with imagery as that of Lord Byron, presents appalling difficulties to a foreigner: but the Princess comprehends enough to repay her labour, and to excite a strong desire to drink deeper of its beauties. Her curiosity as to the character and personal qualities of the poet, afforded her a never-failing fund of enquiry.

There is a strong family resemblance between the German and the English lan-

guage, which materially facilitates the literary acquaintance of the two nations; and the English language is, I apprehend, unquestionably more cultivated in Germany than any where else on the continent. A prophet has no honour in his own country; and it is curious to observe the different judgments of compatriots and foreigners on literary works and authors. In Germany, Ossian — whose reputation in England, whether as Ossian or Macpherson, is at least very qualified—is idolised by every reader of poetry, and forms the first exercise of every sentimental lady who commences English. The mere German reader tastes his sublimities through the medium of translation. I incurred a reproach from the Princess of Hesse for hinting the possibility of her favourite rhapsodies being the manufacture of the Honourable Member for Camelford. Nor was Her Royal Highness at all consoled by my assurance that, on such a supposition, she might felicitate herself on a sort of genealogical connection with her favourite bard; the Macphersons all boasting their descent from the Catti, from whom came the Counts of Katzenel-

lenbogen, the ancestors of the house of Hesse, and the ancient occupiers of the territory of Darmstadt. The same fate attends the Robbers of Schiller, which in Germany are slighted as a youthful extravagance — to be pardoned — not admired; while in England they are, undoubtedly, more read and talked of, if not more approved, than his other works. It is, perhaps, not difficult to account for this. By far the greatest proportion, both of English and Germans form their acquaintance with each others literature, by means of translations. And I apprehend it is not the most finished work which appears the most striking, through this imperfect medium. On the contrary, works of coarser workmanship and broader effect, like the two in question, may often be transfused into a foreign language, with less damage to the original. As for the comparatively few persons who peruse, with difficulty, the originals — in reading a language but imperfectly understood, whatever is broadest, and has fewest shades, is most intelligible, and therefore most interesting. Words acquire a value, independent of the ideas

they express, from the pains one is at to comprehend them; and what is most florid strikes most.

Among other great and little grandees—to use an Hibernian licence—I met at Darmstadt, a Prince of Hesse Homberg, a distinguished officer in the Austrian service, and son of the Landgrave of Homberg, *vor der hohe*, (before the height)—a less than duodecimo territory, at the foot of the Taunus Mountains, near Frankfort. Homberg was, before the late system of making and unmaking Sovereigns, an appanage of a younger branch of the family of Hesse Darmstadt, under the sovereignty of the Grand Duke, with a territory literally not much exceeding, in size, that of Lilliput, as described by Gulliver, "twelve miles in circumference." It contained, then, about 6000 inhabitants. Now the little state is swelled into an absolute monarchy. A patch of territory is given to it on the other side of the Rhine; it musters from 18,000 to 20,000 subjects, and contains 10 square German about 50 square English miles. This enormous aggrandizement, is owing to the influence at Vi-

enna of the four or five sons of the reigning Sovereign, distinguished and meritorious officers in the service of the Emperor of Austria. The Prince Philip, whom I met at Darmstadt, is a pleasant middle-aged man, of simple unaffected manners. His elder brother, the Hereditary Prince, is reported to have sent in his proposals for a marriage with our Princess Elizabeth*, who, it is said, has signified to her Royal Brother her desire of changing her spinster life at Windsor, for that of a wife. Every body speaks well of the Prince, as a brave honest soldier; and though the alliance is not one of much territorial dignity, good character and military distinction are, perhaps, all an English Princess need demand, in the individual whom she honours with her hand. One of the brothers is married to a Princess of Prussia. Homberg is a pretty little place, in a beautiful country under noble mountains. The Reigning Sovereign, a

* This was written long before this happy event had taken place, and even before "a Prince of Hesse Homberg" had excited universal speculation by his appearance at the Pavilion under the wing of the Austrian Ambassador here, and our Ambassador to Austria.

worthy infirm old Prince. The revenue of the state about 15,000*l.* a year.

It is a curious fact, of which I am apprised by a German friend, that this will not be the first connection of little Hesse Homberg with England. As far back as the year 1294, Homberg became, by a singular bargain, a fief of our Edward I. The Emperor Adolphus (of Nassau) was involved in a dispute with Philip of France, with whom our Edward being also disposed to quarrel, entered into a close alliance with the Emperor, and engaged him to declare war against Philip. The chief agent between the two Sovereigns, and promoter of the alliance, was Adolphus's favourite, Eberhard Count of Katzenellenbogen and Lord of Homberg. The King of England, in his anxiety to secure him to his interest, persuaded him to become his vassal, seconding his proposal by 500*l.* of English gold, which it appears possessed as much attraction to little Princes in those days as in these. The Count could not resist the offer, and actually took the oath of allegiance, before an English Ambassador, to the English King, for the castle and town of Homberg.

LETTER IV.

FRANKFORT on the Maine — the ancient place of inauguration of the German Emperors, the residence of the Diet which is to reconstruct the dismembered empire, a centre for colonial commerce, and the great money market of Germany, may, on every account, be considered one of its most interesting cities. The approach from Darmstadt, through a noble beech wood, within the little territory of the free city, is very striking. The road gradually ascends to an old Roman tower, on the brow of the hill, half a mile distant, when the City, with its handsome white slated houses, its venerable Cathedral, and cheerful citizens' mansions and gardens, lies before you in the middle of the rich wide valley of the Maine. On the left you trace the ample course of the river towards Mayence; and a few leagues beyond the town rises the bold wooded chain of the Taunus Mountains,

the highest points of which, above Homberg, are just opposite Frankfort. The road, as far as the suburb, is lined with highly cultivated gardens and vineyards, interspersed with cheerful boxes, whose air of smart comfort announces at once the affluence and mercantile taste of their possessors.

You pass the Maine from the fauxbourg of Saxenhausen, by an ancient stone bridge, to the city. The river on both sides presents a respectable little cluster of shipping, and the quays, with their antique buildings, have a degree of life and bustle which would be more striking to any one than an Englishman familiar with London and Bristol. If the commercial navy of the free city is comparatively insignificant, the general construction of the city itself is, in some respects, more picturesque and interesting than that of the above mentioned money-getting Cities. A cockney would, however, no doubt, prefer the tight tenements of Cornhill, denoting the value of every foot of ground, to the stately rambling mansion, where you enter a large court-yard by a ponderous *porte*

cocher, which does not appear constructed for the momentary ingress and egress of a very lively commerce. In almost every town in Germany the top of one of the church towers, is inhabited by a family, who watch during the night, and give alarm in case of fire. They sound a small horn at every quarter or half-hour, in evidence of their vigilance; and are provided with an immense fire-horn or alarum-bell, to rouse the inhabitants in case of danger. From the tower of the church on the central Parade Place, which serves this purpose, we enjoyed a fine panoramic view of Frankfort. The compact oval city, with its handsome buildings, and white cheerful streets, lay beneath us; the Maine running along the southern side, and surrounded on all others by the luxuriant shrubberies and gardens of the merchants. The Zeil, a noble wide street, traversing the town, is the only handsome one: but the old narrow lanes, with their lofty houses, quaint casements, and gable fronts, have an antique respectability, and remind one of the early splendour of the Imperial City. The more

modern parts of the town abound with handsome mansions, some of which deserve the name of palaces. The old ramparts are levelled, the ditches filled in, and their place occupied by rich shrubbery walks, laid out in the irregular English style: embellishments, chiefly the work of the Prince Primate, during his occupation of the city and territory. In a fine day you meet here the substantial *bourgeois*, and stately belles of the city, walking with a sedate tranquillity and grave decorum, equally remote from the gay flutter of a Parisian promenade, and the gaping curiosity of the Cockney assemblage in Hyde Park.

Frankfort is one of the four Imperial Cities, which are all that the legislators of Vienna have thought fit to restore to their ancient privileges and republican constitution. A small territory, to the extent of half a league each way, is carved out for it round the city. The two Burgomasters, the Senate, and the Council are again invested with the ensigns of republican sovereignty. The city is garrisoned by its own

civic troop, of about 5 or 600 men, besides a militia of about 3000; and the mercantile commonwealth is ostensibly established on the same footing, as in its old Imperial days. But the free cities are elements of the old constitution, which are, I fear, little calculated to survive it in their former flourishing condition. As long as the Empire existed, their dependence on its head procured the defenceless commonwealth a protection against powerful and despotic neighbours: their gold cementing their friendly union with the Imperial House — but who are the worthy burghers of Frankfort to look to now in times of oppression — more likely to occur since their quiet ecclesiastical neighbours have been wiped away, to make room for keen military sovereigns, ever on the watch for aggrandizement?

As far as I could learn, the government of the Baron Dalberg, Prince Primate of the Rhenish Confederation, and Grand Duke of Frankfort, was by no means unpopular in the city. The impositions were nearly the same as at present, and an ex-

pensive Court produced a circulation of money and a bustle and show which help to content people as much as solid advantages. The visits of Napoleon to his crowned minion, were to be sure rather redoubtable to the good merchants. On one occasion, the happy event of his arrival was announced by an order for a forced loan of an immense sum of florins. The simple Dalberg thought the sum intended for him, and began to beseech his munificent master not to load him with a superfluous bounty. Napoleon departed and left his General to execute his orders. The city sent deputies to Paris with petitions and remonstrances, who returned with the usual success. The Prince Primate is described as a weak man of talents and literary acquirements, more expert as an author than as a sovereign. His family is one of the most ancient and considerable in Germany. An office at the coronation was always filled by one of them, whom the Emperor demanded by calling out, "*Is there no Dalberg here?*" The Prince Primate had been originally Coadjutor, that is, Arch-

bishop elect of Mayence. On the destruction of the Ecclesiastical Electorate he was made Bishop of Ratisbon, and Prince Primate of the Empire. Here Napoleon found him a ready tool for accomplishing his alliance with the German Princes; and for his eminent services, rewarded him with the Grand Duchy of Frankfort, Aschaffenburg, and a territory in the neighbourhood, besides other gifts. His brother is attached to the royalists in France, and has been created Duke Dalberg, by Louis XVIII.

Notwithstanding the sufferings of Frankfort, in the late war, I could not discover among the citizens with whom I conversed, that satisfaction at their present tranquillity which might have been anticipated. I have even observed in some a regret, but half concealed, of the past days of war and activity. They had then a Court, Generals, Staff, and troops. The French army, since the revolution, have generally been well supplied with money, from the General to the private. They spent freely, and conducted themselves tolerably well—is the general account given

of them at Frankfort. In several German towns they were preferred to the native troops. Civility would go a great way with a French soldier, but a German was always grumbling. An old servant of a gentleman of my acquaintance came to him in dismay at having a couple of French Officers billeted on him, not knowing how to provide for them. The gentleman, who had had some experience of the French character, recommended him to treat them with civility, and lent him a few silver forks and dishes to serve up the scanty fare he could afford them. The experiment answered. The Frenchmen ate their bread-soup and potatoes off plate with great content, and returned the man's attentions with so many little acts of generosity, that he came to his master with tears in his eyes when his guests departed. On the occasion of the arrival of Napoleon, or any of his generals, money was scattered about with a profusion, by which all ranks profited. When a body of French troops approached, the poor mechanics and little shopkeepers would rush out of the gates to meet them, sure to re-

turn loaded with the prices of their baskets of small merchandize, which the soldiers would eagerly purchase. Now the complaint is, that every thing is stagnant—the nobility poor—the merchants impoverished —the manufacturers ruined by their English rivals; and the scantiness of expenditure thus produced, is by no means made up by the Ambassadors of the Diet, who live with that mixture of ostentation and narrowness so common among the German nobility.

The citizens, of more enlarged views and consequence, whom I know, are not vastly more pleased with their condition. As their superior wealth drew down on them severer pecuniary calamities, their actual condition is, they admit, ameliorated; but they have little or no faith in its security or duration. Under the Prince Primate they were, at least, attached to a system which could protect them while it existed; if they were oppressed they had but one virtual master; they are now in possession of a freedom which they cannot defend—surrounded by ambitious military sovereigns—an isolated atom in the chaos of unorgan-

ized Germany—without *appui* or support, except in their little civic trainbands, or in their Excellencies, the German Diet.

The affair of Colonel Massenbach, which you have no doubt read of in the papers, has put to the test the value of the free city's independence. The Colonel took refuge in the city on being pursued by the Prussian Government. The Prussian Ambassador at the Court of Hesse, was commissioned to demand his delivery. The Burgomasters hesitated, deliberated, consulted with the Senators, to come at last to the only prudent determination—not to hazard a refusal to the King of Prussia. Their conduct is much condemned by the citizens, who consider the proceeding as the first violation of their newly regained privileges; and no one doubts that the magistrates themselves would fain have evaded the summons, if a compliance had not been the only politic course.

Frankfort, for so considerable a city, is by no means rich in public buildings and objects of curiosity. The Cathedral, a large awkward edifice, possesses little interest but in its antiquity, and as the scene of the

coronation of the ancient emperors. The celebrated Roemer (town-house) has still less architectural beauty: it is an ordinary old white house, on the Roemer Square, in the ranks of the other buildings. In a shabby office of the municipality, you are shown, by one of the clerks, the renowned Golden Bull; a musty parchment, settling the constitution of the Empire, in the time of the Emperor Frederick II. The modern destroyer of the Empire, had conveyed this precious archive to Paris; but it is now restored. Above is the *Kayser Saal*, (Emperor's Saloon,) a large shabby chamber, with an arched boarded roof—the scene of the coronation entertainment. The walls are decorated with old fresco paintings of the different Emperors: the last compartment being singularly enough filled by the figure of His present Majesty of Austria. By another curious coincidence, I have been assured, that in the church of St. Stephen, at Vienna, where the statues of the Emperors are placed in niches round the walls, the present Emperor occupies the last niche. And to complete the list of

incidents of ominous import to the unfortunate house of Austria, a lady who was present at the present Emperor's coronation, as Emperor of Germany, assured me that the crown sat so painfully, during the ceremony, on his Imperial Majesty's head, that he was obliged to relieve himself by taking it off.

The Michaelmas fair, during which I was in Frankfort, commences early in September; and its bustle and vivacity lasts throughout the month. The considerable wholesale transactions are, however, transacted within the first week, when numbers of the merchants flock to the fair at Leipsic. The Exchange, a small neat quadrangle, surrounded by a range of warehouses and shops, called the Braunfels, is thronged during the fair with a respectable cluster of merchants of all nations; perhaps a twentieth part of the number who assemble daily on our Exchange. High Change is about 12 o'clock, from which the merchants return home to dinner; they generally commence business at six or seven in the morning, and toil till 10 or 11 at night; not having, as yet, attained to that methodical celerity, which

in London, dispatches a hundred times the amount of affairs between the commodious hours of nine and six. The large rooms in the Braunfels, are fitted up as show rooms and shops, like those of Exeter Change, loaded with merchandizes, showy and useful, from all quarters of Germany, Switzerland, Hungary, Bohemia, &c. as you are apprised by boards, with the name and domicile of every tradesman. Every vacant house, warehouse, or single room, in the busy neighbourhood of the Exchange, is hired by the foreign shopkeepers, for the exposition of their goods. The fairs, which had naturally declined during the obstructions of war, are gradually resuming their former alacrity. Frankfort, at other times, by no means lively, has, during the Fair, the cheerful aspect of a bustling trading city; the inns, the Theatre, the Casino, the Exchange, are thronged and lively; the streets present a respectable number of equipages; the stalls and shops are crowded by well dressed and handsome women; and though there are no extraordinary amusements, or objects of attraction for a mere spectator,

there is a life and variety in the scene, which gives it an interest.

The Casino at Frankfort, one of the most splendid in Germany, is a noble establishment, occupying one of the handsomest mansions in the city, and furnishing all the literary or political journals of Germany, besides the newspapers of almost all Europe. The order, luxury, and convenience of the arrangements, might tempt the most listless reader. Billiard tables and card rooms find a place in the suite of apartments, which are fitted up with elegance; and present, amongst other *agrémens*, handsome carpets—luxuries confined in Germany to Courts, and the houses of a very few individuals.

The merchants of Frankfort are resolved not to be behind their princely neighbours, in giving their city the attraction of the Fine Arts. A rich banker, M. Städel, has lately bequeathed a sum of above 100,000*l.* sterling, for the foundation of an Academy, together with a respectable collection, containing some morsels of the Flemish school, of considerable merit. His will is litigated by his family; but it is probable, that

the interests of the fine arts will triumph. Private collections are extremely numerous; there is scarcely a merchant or banker in Frankfort, of moderate affluence, who has not his little gallery of *chef d'œuvres*, which with his music, forms his favorite relaxation from the fatigue of business.

But the object of the fine arts, which gave me the greatest gratification, was a single statue, belonging to M. Bethmann, the great banker. In a summer house in his pleasing garden, in the suburbs, you find a collection of admirable casts, executed at Paris, from the celebrated antiques; besides, one marble statue by Danekker, of Stutgard, surpassing any thing I have seen in modern sculpture. It is an Ariadne seated on a Lion — in an attitude of great difficulty of execution, but easy and graceful in the highest degree. She is reclining on one side — her right elbow supported on the Lion's shoulder, her head turned with a pensive grace — one drooping hand holds the clue of thread, while the other lightly supports her right foot. The position is so involved, that nothing but the most consummate art could have

reconciled it with nature. It is one of the happiest conceptions of grace that an artist's imagination ever hit upon. The figure is the perfection of feminine beauty — with none of the pomp of a Goddess — reclining in the soft graces of a voluptuous, but simple form. — The marble seems, from the exquisite truth of execution, to have a warmth — and the *contours* are as soft and as round as those of Titian. The Lion is a majestic beast, worthy of the load he bears. The statue stands on a pedestal turning on a pivot for the convenience of viewing it in various lights. — A rose-coloured window is also contrived, the light through which, when raised, is intended to shed on the marble the warm hue of flesh; but the effect is rather that of salmon-colour — and the natural light is far preferable. — Danekker had this admirable work fifteen years in hand. — He composed it for M. Bethmann, and received one thousand guineas for his inimitable labours. M. B. has, I understand, since been offered for it nearly three times the sum. The artist is now employed for him on another work to match it.

Society at Frankfort is divided into the circles of the Diet and those of the citizens, who, with the exception of *rencontres* at the public assemblies, keep pretty scrupulously apart. At the balls dreadful altercations for precedence have sometimes taken place between the wives and daughters of their Excellencies the Ministers, and of their Worships the Civic Magistrates — but their opposing claims are, I believe, now adjusted in favour of the latter. The rich bankers, some of whom eclipse in their establishments the most splendid of the Plenipotentiaries, are, as you may suppose, often convenient friends for the Diplomatists; and their smart wives and daughters, agreeable resources to the young nobles — the belles of their own class being somewhat scanty. A gay young Count, attached to a Legation, was the acknowleged beau of a pretty banker's wife — and a young merchant of my acquaintance was a welcome guest at the Diplomatic balls — purely from being a good dancer. The line of demarcation is in this way frequently broken through, and becomes every day less exclu-

sive—and the *opposition* class of citizens sometimes accuse the Burgomasters and Senators of aristocratic ideas, caught in intermixing with the Representatives of Sovereigns. The Merchants generally live in a hospitable style. As they have no occasion for the Court dresses, carriages, *chasseurs*, &c. which drain the pockets of the *Vons*, they can afford to treat you with a solid dinner, and hock of a good vintage. The lemonade of the evening noble circles is often substantial *bouilli* among the merchants; and instead of insipid sentiment or gossip, you often meet with rational conversation.

The Diet, who have done so little, and have so much to do, is held at the residence of the President, the Ambassador of Austria—a stately gloomy mansion—perhaps not without influence on the character of its proceedings.—A sketch of the composition of the Assembly may throw light on your political acquaintance with Germany in its present state.—There are seventeen votes; eleven of which are enjoyed by eleven Powers, considered important enough to possess a whole vote to

themselves. — These are Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, Wurtemburg, Baden, Electoral Hesse, the Grand Duchy of Hesse, Denmark for her German Province of Holstein, and the Netherlands for that of Luxembourg. — Then follow about twenty, οι πολλοι Principalities, who, with the free cities, divide among them the remaining six votes — the Houses of Saxony possessing one amongst them, of which the King of Prussia comes in for his quotum as Duke of Saxony. — Brunswick shares one with Nassau; and Mecklenburg Strelitz and Schwerin are loving cousins and co-partners. Then comes the respectable firm of Anhalt, Oldenburg, and Schwartzburg — the first of which is subdivided into Bernburg, Cöthen, &c. the insignificance of the latter of which Sovereignties caused a separation between an English lady and her German husband, who had attained the elevated office of Governor to the Prince's sons; and when he wrote to his spouse to join him at the capital of Cöthen, she declined a search for him in a place which she could not distinguish on the Map. — Hohenzollern is at the head of another joint Stock Com-

pany, of five or six tiny Proprietors; and by a singular disregard of proportion, the four free Cities of Hamburg, Lubec, Bremen, and Frankfort, each, containing perhaps, a score Merchants, of greater opulence and consequence than any of the small reigning fry, are put off with one Vote amongst them. It is easy to imagine their weight in the scale.

Thus the Diet is ordinarily composed of seventeen Plenipotentiaries—besides which, most of the great Powers of Europe have a Minister at Frankfort accredited to the Diet, as the supreme Power of Germany.—On occasions of unusual moment, or matters affecting the basis of the confederation, the Assembly will expand itself into sixty-nine votes—for the benefit of the deliberations of sixty-nine wise heads, instead of seventeen.—The kingly powers, of which Wurtemburg is the last, will then enjoy four Votes; Baden, Electoral Hesse, and the Grand Duchy of Hesse three—and so in proportion: on these occasions a question must be carried by three-fourths of the votes—on ordinary ones by a simple majority.—The Powers are bound

not to make war on each other, but to submit to the pacific arbitration of their disputes by the Assembly.—Commerce among the States is declared free, and emigrations and transfers of property, which were formerly prohibited or taxed, are freely permitted. — They engage early to occupy themselves with general regulations for securing the Freedom of the Press, and the restoration of the States General to every State.

The deliberations take place in German, and of course are private. — Hitherto territorial and statistic arrangements have principally occupied attention. During my visits to Frankfort the Diet was not sitting. The more interesting and difficult task will soon be brought before them, of settling the constitutions of each State, and arranging the extent of the concessions which absolute monarchies must make to the demands for rational freedom.

An address to the Diet, praying for the establishment of the States in all the Governments, in compliance with the express engagement in the act of the Confederation, is now circulating from house to house

for signatures. No one knows whence it comes — a request to sign and circulate it is annexed — and it is loaded with names of inhabitants of almost all States. How far the Serene Assembly are likely to fulfil the expectations of the people, and to hold the scales with prudence and authority, as head of the Germanic Confederation is a subject on which the Germans are far from sanguine. The slow forms, and the preference of trite details, to momentous points, which they have hitherto displayed, have subjected them to much ridicule and distrust. It is rare to hear the sage Conclave spoken of with confidence, and almost with respect. A French Ambassador, in Germany, replied to my enquiry, what the Diet were doing? "*Ils parlent — ils font de superbes oraisons — voila tout.*" Among Noblesse and Bourgeois the same remark is often made, almost in the same words. Even official Courtiers and brother Diplomatists, allude to the Assembly with a smile of doubt, and a sceptical shrug as to its competency to the high functions assigned to it. It would seem hardly probable that the peo-

ple should meet with any great consideration from an assembly of Ministers, from Sovereign Powers. But on my hinting this to one of the Members of the Assembly, he assured me that Russia, Prussia, and the great Powers of Europe who have Ambassadors at Frankfort, are resolved to exert their influence to put the States in possession of Constitutions — whatever may be the reluctance of many Sovereigns. I trust these liberal intentions may be acted on — called for as they are by the claims of reason and enlightened justice, the repeated promises of Sovereigns, when in want of their people's services — and the solemn engagement of the Act of Confederation.

LETTER V.

We proceeded to Aschaffenburg, by way of Wilhelmsbad and Hanau. The road runs through the fertile valley of the Maine, sometimes for miles along the river; the Taunus mountains rising grandly on our left as we quitted the stately towers and buildings of Frankfort. The Maine here glides through a sandy plain, scattered with villages rich in mingled gardens, orchards and corn country. The handsome white chateau of Rumbelheim, appeared on the edge of the stream—a cheerful summer residence of the Prince Frederic of Hesse Cassel, the father of the intended Duchess of Cambridge — a Princess generally spoken well of, and described as amiable and accomplished.

The whole country from the Heidelberg to the Rhingau, and Homburg mountains, and from the Rhine to the mountains

of the Spessart, presents one face. The vast plain is divided between large forests of the common *Pinus Sylvestris*, occasionally interspersed with oak and beech woods, (though these are principally on the higher ground,) and large bare districts of corn and vegetables, unrelieved by a single tree or hedge. The open fields are divided into small patches, by the difference of culture, which frequently denote the boundaries of each little peasant's farm. There are no large farms — and the proportion of those which are rented is small. The peasant generally farms his own little possession, paying tithe to his sovereign. When the young peasant starts in life, marrying is of course his first step. — His father advances him a sum sufficient to purchase a few acres of the sandy-soil, and a few cows. — If the donation is not very important, he often buys double the quantity, and mortgages his land to some monied man in the town — an accommodation to both parties. The investment supplies the place of public funds in States where they do not exist, and is often preferred to them where they do. A gentle-

man at Hanau, told me he had several thousands outstanding among the peasants in the neighbouring mountains, who brought him his interest with great punctuality.

The approach to Wilhelmsbad, which lies to the left of the road, is through a noble avenue of poplars, which looked doubly stately in the darkness of the evening when I arrived. The gloomy avenue is terminated by a thick plantation surrounding a Gothic tower, the factitious antiquity of which was happily concealed by the shades of night. — The road divides, winding round the tower into the plantation, by a bridge over a canal, whose artificial falls and rattling impetuosity, sounded very formidable. I was obliged to grope my way through this accumulation of horrors increased by the *omne ignotum pro magnifico*, till the lights in the hotel at Wilhelmsbad appeared through the trees to direct my steps.

Wilhelmsbad is a range of handsome white, slated buildings, in a sequestered spot, surrounded by woods; originally built by the Elector of Hesse for a summer residence, for the convenience of the baths of

mineral water. The Elector, with whom money is the *summum bonum*, has now converted it into a hotel, reserving a single suite of rooms for himself. For a considerable time His Highness farmed the Establishment on his own account, and pocketed the profits of the *table d'hôte* and the baths, as readily as any plebeian Boniface. Some jests of the King of Prussia and others, at the expence of the illustrious *Aubergiste*, induced him to let it to its present occupier. It is much frequented in summer by all ranks; and, besides picturesque gardens and shrubberies, presents the usual *agrémens* of a German Watering Place—a gaming table, a *table d'hôte*, public balls, swings, roundabouts, &c. The old Elector, who is doatingly fond of Wilhelmsbad, has bestowed much pains, and some taste, in laying out the grounds. The immediate environs of the house are in a cultivated and domestic taste, gradually growing more wild as you penetrate further into the surrounding wood. The place has a pleasing, and what the Germans call a *friendly* air, in spite of a profusion of little canals, bridges, islands, &c. too much in the

style of a tea-house garden at Pentonville. The season, at its height in July, was past when I visited Wilhelmsbad — and the Prince Paul of Wirtemberg, an exile from his own country, with his wife and family, almost the only remaining guests.

On the occupation by the French of the territory of Hesse Cassel, Wilhelmsbad was bestowed by Buonaparte on one of his Generals; and the neighbouring Electoral Palace of Philipsruhe, on his Sister Pauline, who, however, never occupied it.

Hanau is a compact, moderate sized town, one part of it of considerable antiquity, and irregularly built — the other part principally erected by French refugees, in the seventeenth century — and consisting of regular straight streets, with one large formal *Place*, containing the old *Rath Haus*, (Town House,) and a quaint ornamented well in each corner. Its trade is much fallen — and its wealth declined of late years. The Elector, when Hereditary Prince, resided here, but the palace has been deserted since his coming to the throne. There are many emigrants from Flanders; and a considerable number of

Swiss (a people to be found every where) have settled here, and imported their skill and industry in the arts of watch-making and jewellery. This is now the principal direction of the activity of the inhabitants, who find a market for their productions in Russia and the north of Germany, whither they are conveyed by land, or, as the Germans familiarly say, *auf der Achse* (upon the axle-tree), a phrase, which one of our ingenious Journalists, in translating a German newspaper, once took for the *river Achse*, lamenting, that on reference to the map, he could not discover this river, which the German newspaper pointed out as the only mode of supplying the towns on the Elbe with goods, on Napoleon's blockade of that river.

Hanau, once considerable among the free cities of Germany, is now ostensibly restored since the peace to some of its ancient privileges. The towns-people are tolerably contented. The taxes are moderate; which, I was surprised to learn, is very generally the case in the territories of this tyrannical and singular Prince. At Hanau, every one is permitted to return their own

income, and those who possess above a certain number of guilders, (not a very large sum), pay about forty shillings a year. This is the only direct impost they are liable to.

There are few Princes against whom the cry of oppression has been louder, than against this hoary despot. His bartering of his people to bleed in foreign service, on the other side of the Atlantic, is a stigma not to be effaced — but, in justice it should be considered, that the buyers were scarcely less blameable than the sellers. And, though nothing can justify the principle of such a traffic, I am inclined to think it did not, in fact, cause all the misery attributed to it. The inhabitants of the sands of Westphalia, were not attached to their dismal homes, by the ties which have made such ardent patriots of the mountaineers of Switzerland, or the Tyrol. They were most of them willing emigrants. The Germans are excellent settlers and soldiers, and have generally shown a sort of phlegmatic indifference about the position of the soil they tilled, or the colours they defended. The Elector's cupidity would, however, have hesi-

tated little, if the misery he caused had been greater. Avarice, *hauteur*, and the foppery of a martinet, are his ruling passions. Having no longer a market for his subjects, his disposition takes the direction of starving them by monopolies and speculations in corn on his own account. By a whimsical sort of conscientiousness, he, however, acts the miser equally with his public and his private purse—sometimes in opposition to his personal tastes. His troops are his favourite hobbies; but no troops are worse paid, more shabbily cloathed, or more generally discontented —and by a strange coincidence in a state where the Prince is a notorious drill-sergeant, ever occupied in military details, the army are universally disaffected to the government. He, in fact, treats them as mere puppets, whom he likes to see dressed, and performing their evolutions like obedient machines — for their comfort or well-doing he little concerns himself. When I was at Hanau, the old Prince was expected — an event announced, as usual, by the yard of horse-hair, powder, and pomatum dangling on the backs of the

guards — a gratifying spectacle, without which the old Sovereign can by no means eat his dinner, or take his rest. The instant his back is turned, these cumbrous accoutrements are taken off, to be resumed on the next Electoral visit. Even the day that he was expected, I observed a number of officers without these decorations; who refused, at all risks, to make monkeys of themselves.

A subjection to such caprices is sufficient to disgust soldiers with any sense of their dignity; but the Elector has taken more effectual means to alienate his troops, along with a great body of his subjects. Restored to his dominions, where he was expected with an impatience which moderate prudence might have turned to account, he thought with a stroke of the pen to transform his states to the precise condition in which he had left them. He annulled the sale of the national domains, restored them to the emigrant proprietors, without recompence to the new ones. Every act of the Westphalian government was declared void. All Jerome's *employés* were dismissed and many obliged to quit the country. The promotions of

the old servants of the Elector, who had remained in the French service, were nullified, and they displaced or sent back to their former rank. The army were treated in the same way—and more than one general was degraded to his former rank of lieutenant. A gentleman in office, who knew how to stoop to conquer, got the whip-hand of the Monarch, with much adroitness.—When the Electoral Government left the country, he was secretary of a Department, of which he was made President during the Westphalian reign. The President seeing the course adopted by the Elector, when he was sent for in turn, and asked his situation, replied with humility, "I am secretary of the department of ——." The feeble old monarch, pleased with this recognition of his retrograding principle, instantly bade the secretary remain President.

Some time ago, their small pay, and the continued vexations to which they were subject, induced the subaltern officers to assemble and address the States to interfere in their behalf. The address was signed by all the officers except three. Two

were charged to present it; on their arrival at Cassel, they were arrested and imprisoned. The account given in a German Journal of this transaction is so interesting and little known, that I cannot forbear sending it you.

"The Staff Captain of Artillery, Huth, "and the First Lieutenant De Rottsmann, "were confined in the Castle of Cassel, as "instigators of the address. Their fate "was long unknown; and never had an "event occurred in the country which ex- "cited so strongly the interest of all ranks. "The officers received, not only from their "brethren in arms, but from all the in- "habitants of Cassel, continued proofs of "good wishes. Serenades were given them "at night on the Fulda, which runs under "the Castle. An officer, who was passing "the bridge with his company on mount- "ing guard, seeing De Rottsman at the "window, cried out to his men to salute "him; and they gave the prisoner all the "honours of a Prince. The pastors in- "troduced the event in their sermons, and "took occasion to exhort the people to "perseverance and boldness in the struggle

" for their liberties; some of them select-
" ing for a text, Luke, chap. xii. v. 32.,
" 'Fear not, little flock, for it is your
" Father's good pleasure to give you the
" kingdom.' The conduct of the three
" officers who had refused to sign the ad-
" dress excited such general disgust, that
" the people with whom they lodged re-
" fused to retain them in their houses.
" When the public mind was in this state,
" the order was published, sentencing the
" two officers to six months arrest in a
" fortress, and dismissal from the service;
" while the three captains who had refused
" to sign were praised for their exemplary
" conduct, and promoted. As the affair
" remained so long undecided, report as-
" serted that the Elector had consulted the
" Prussian Government what course to
" take: but this is not probable. The
" Elector is of an independent character,
" and little consults others in his resolu-
" tions. The order was not issued without
" visible apprehensions; the garrison was
" dispersed — two battalions removed from
" Cassel — and the Hereditary Prince, fear-
" ful of passing the night at the Palace,

" retired to Wilhelmshohe. Such precau-
" tions were unnecessary, and the fears
" which inspired them ill-founded. All
" the officers detested sedition, and had
" no other view than that of asserting their
" rights in a legitimate and moderate man-
" ner. Almost at the moment when the
" order was published, the sheets of the
" *Observateur Allemand*, which related the
" commencement of the affair, arrived at
" Cassel. They were seized at the post by
" order of the Government. This only
" served to give more importance to the
" opinions of an impartial writer. The
" prohibited numbers were brought from
" the neighbouring States, and read with
" avidity. Vain efforts to conceal the
" truth! Nothing can now remain beneath
" a veil. An injustice committed on the
" shores of the Baltic rouses a cry of dis-
" content throughout Germany, which
" resounds to the mountains of Rhetia."

On the publication of the order, all the subalterns of all the regiments demanded their *congé*, according to prescribed forms; each officer remitting to his commander a note to this effect:—" In signing the ad-

"dress to the States, the subscriber has "incurred, on his honour, obligations which "compel him to demand his dismissal, "since he is only willing to serve his "country and his Prince as a man of ho-"nour."—The officers acted with an unanimity and dignity which increased the esteem of the public, and the interest taken in their fate. Some, who were married, and without fortune, were relieved by their brethren from the obligation of resigning; but they refused, with disdain, to separate themselves from the common cause. One only officer refused to give in his resignation: he was generally insulted on the parade, and when he sought protection from his superiors, he was received by them with contempt. Many of the officers, thus thrown out of employ, embarked for America; and the Elector thus lost the services of a body of men, whose attachment would have been inviolable, if he had won it by mild and reasonable treatment.

Contrary to the general fact, the Elector is, I understand, no where more unpopular than in his own Capital, Cassel. The

penury of his Court and government, as well as its arbitrary caprice, are there more immediately felt, and more strikingly contrasted with the extravagant splendour and gaiety of the French Sovereign and his suite; and, by a singular coincidence, the persons who least suffer from the oppression of the old doating tyrant, are the peasants, who are removed out of its sphere, and on whom the taxes are very moderate. It is politic in the Elector to avoid equally exasperating the lower and the higher orders of his subjects; as it is among the former that discontents generally assume an active shape, and in such an event, he could little rely upon the affection of troops, whom he treats with a mixture of caprice and injustice.

Little neighbouring States have their rivalries as well as great ones; and not the less ardent for the insignificance of their causes. An ancient animosity has subsisted between the house of Hesse Cassel and Hesse Darmstadt, in some degree extending to the subjects of the two countries. This grave breach, which has kept his Electoral

Highness for many years a stranger to his Grand Ducal neighbour, has just now been closed: an event, signalized by an exchange of the orders of the respective houses, and a reciprocal conferring of them on the respective Prime-ministers. A bridge over the Maine which separates the two territories, is to be built in token of reconciliation. About three weeks ago, the Elector paid his first visit at Darmstadt, with the Crown Prince, when he was received in grand gala at Court; and to the usual gracious summons from the Court —*Fourrier, in propria personâ*, was added, an agreeable command to be at the Castle by twelve o'clock, to form a circle to receive his Electoral Highness:—the ladies not to forget their trains.

The Elector's person is not more attractive than his character. He is now advanced in age, and has the infirmity of an enormous excrescence, nearly the size of a hat, on his neck. A fair lady of my acquaintance, who was in a family way, was recommended to beg an excuse from Court from encountering an object so little likely

to produce pleasant impressions. She however persisted in meeting his Electoral Highness: and the first view cost her an involuntary shudder — I trust the only consequence of her hardihood.*

The Crown Prince is in most respects the reverse of his father, without being a jot more estimable: dissolute, extravagant, without character, and loaded with debt. He married a Princess of Prussia, who suffers much from his brutality. The people have little hopes from his succession, which will probably present only a change of evils — "*Dente lupus, cornu taurus petit.*" He will spend more money among them; at first drawn from the treasures of his father — afterwards, in all probability, from their own pockets. The Elector returned the same evening from Darmstadt to his favourite Wilhelmsbad; while his hopeful son, for whom a pleasant evening circle was prepared by the amiable Hereditary Princess of Hesse, had the good taste to prefer

* I rejoice since, to learn that the fair Baroness has safely given birth to two fine boys as yet presenting no traces of the impressions made by the Elector.

putting himself to bed at six o'clock, and amusing himself with a circle of courtiers round his bed-side!

North of the town, on the other side of a small river is the spacious field bounded by extensive woods, the scene of the battle of Hanau — the last stand of the French in their hurried retreat from Leipsic. — The town was garrisoned by Bavarians — and large bodies of Austrians and Bavarians had marched thither from Aschaffenburg, to intercept the retreat of the French. In the conflict, the town was several times taken and retaken, and a large portion of the suburbs are still in ruins from conflagration. In the Jews' street, on the northern side, the watch-word was changed between the French *Qui vive?* and the German *Wer ist da?* seven times in the course of the night. A mill on the little river, was the scene of desperate conflicts. The post was in possession of the Bavarians, and the mill-dam served as a communication between the field of battle and the Hanau side of the stream. In the course of the conflict, the Bavarians and

the French in turn often retreated and pursued each other over this slippery bridge—the miller favouring the former by drawing off the water as they passed, and suffering it to flow again, to obstruct the passage of their adversaries. Hundreds of Frenchmen thus found their graves in the mill-hole. Though the French were routed at Hanau, with immense loss, their defeat is considered not to have been so complete as it might have been; and the Prince Wrede, who commanded, is much blamed by military men, for not having waited for them in a narrow pass between the hills, near Hanau, which they must pass, and where their retreat might have been completely cut off.

How far these criticisms are just, it is difficult to judge—but when was a battle ever fought, on which fire-side Heroes did not discover that if this General had done that, or that Officer had not neglected this, the victory would have been so much more complete — or so many thousand lives would have been spared? Perhaps the critics of the Battle of Hanau, like those of many other battles, are of that sort which

are so admirably silenced by Sir George England, in the Tatler.

A young Belgian Officer, who was Aid de Camp to General Excelmans, at the battle of Hanau, described Buonaparte's temper to me in lively colours. — His rage, of which both himself and the General were occasional objects, was frantic and ridiculous beyond measure. — He would gnash and grin with his teeth, and talk through them in a shrill, crying, tone — and fling his cocked hat on the ground, and jump on it — then drop on a sudden, into a tone of irony or exhausted composure. — Some General (I think a General Lihu,) who had commanded a body of Cavalry, in an engagement, had committed a fault. — Buonaparte ordered another to take the command, and the General to attend him. — He assailed him with a torrent of abuse, the lowest and most emphatic he could bring forth — concluding with — *mais cependant vous êtes une brave homme — je me fie à vous — mais vous ne valez pas quatre sous — vous êtes un —— bête.* — And, after thus abusing the poor General's incapacity, the Emperor showed his appreciation of his fidelity by

instantly giving him the command of a guard round his own person.

A French Nobleman gave me a somewhat similar account of his occasional fits of choler at his levees and audiences. A disgraced diplomatist, one day appeared at the Levee, as if nothing had happened. Buonaparte's rage on the occasion was awful. — He burst upon him, pursued him with voluble invectives, and fairly abused him out of the circle. His manner was soured for the rest of the day; and he accosted every body after, with a sort of snappish politeness — asking one "*Comment se porte votre femme?*" in a tone of invective — and another his judgment on a picture or a tragedy, in a voice of thunder.

You will laugh when I tell you that a very profitable letter of introduction which I presented at Hanau, was from the pen of a most invaluable personage — my washerwoman in London. The good woman having a daughter in service at Hanau, I charged myself with a packet for her, under cover to her master, one of the first citizens of the town. His wife being an Englishwoman, and he himself having resided many

years in England, they overloaded me with hospitable attentions. My host's history is rather curious. A quarrel with his step-mother had induced him to quit home young, and embark for England. Having acquired a fortune in trade large enough for Germany, he married and returned to his native place, where he found his parents dead, and himself in possession of their property. A large rambling house, containing thirteen rooms on a floor, and adorned with pictures of old Electors, in which I found him, was a part of his patrimony. The house goes by the name of Noah's Ark, from the singularity of its construction, arising, as the story goes, from a singular cause. The upper story is a complete second house, built on the first. The builder, an opulent citizen, who possessed ninety-nine houses in Hanau, was ambitious of attaining to a hundred — but the jealousy of the citizens opposed his harmless whim, unless he consented to pave a path to the church, some hundred yards long, with Reichs Dollars. He declined this exorbitant tax; but unwilling to resign the pride of one hundred houses, he contented his

ambition with a hundredth placed on the top of one of the ninety-nine.

My Hanau acquaintance, now a gentleman at ease, is amusing himself in constructing a steam-boat to navigate on the Maine and the Rhine, between Frankfort and Amsterdam. A clever mechanic, whom he has found at Hanau, flatters himself to have discovered several improvements which will obviate the danger, and increase the power of the machine. With all his ingenuity, I have great doubts whether the stream of the Rhine, at all times very rapid, and sometimes swelling to an irresistible torrent by a single day's rain, will not be an insurmountable obstacle to the scheme. It has already foiled several attempts of the kind. In the meantime difficulties hardly less formidable, present themselves in the hesitations and the scruples of the diplomatists of the different Governments at Mayence *, whose consent it is necessary to obtain. Some

* Mayence is the seat of a Central Committee for the superintendance of the navigation of the Rhine — composed of Commissioners from the different States who border on the river.

of the Powers demur about the colours he is to carry — others the danger of the mode of navigation. The builder is willing to remove the former difficulty, by carrying the colours of all, or any of the Powers, as they please; and he is building a model of his vessel, with which he will return to the scrupulous Diplomatists, to convince them of the impossibility of danger.

Taking leave of our hospitable acquaintance, we proceeded towards Aschaffenburg. We passed a handsome obelisk, just out of the city, erected by the grateful townsmen to the Elector, when he was stopped in his career of beautifying and improving the city, by his elevation to the throne. A fine, open, fertile country lay before us, terminated by the lofty wooded mountains of the Spessart Forest, which commence just above Aschaffenburg.

On the left, about two leagues from the road, rises a bold range of hills, covered with forest and cultivated country; the commencement of a district, called the Frei Gericht, to which the simplicity and sturdy spirit of its inhabitants give consi-

derable interest. The Frei Gericht was formerly an *immediate* territory of the Emperor, and partly from that circumstance, and its remoteness from the seat of empire, the inhabitants enjoyed an undisturbed existence, with many immunities, to which their neighbours were strangers. In the commencement of the revolutionary war, the Emperor ceded the district to the Elector, in liquidation of a debt. The first attempt of this new master was to make soldiers of the rude inhabitants, who had hardly heard the report of a gun. They opposed themselves to this invasion of their freedom, with an inveteracy and indignation surpassing all bounds. Squadrons of troops were sent into the mountains, who secured parties of the peasants, after a desperate defence with their implements of husbandry, and brought them down to Hanau. Here they were subjected to the cruellest discipline of the guard-room, which they supported with an obstinate and declared determination never to become soldiers but in defence of their own mountains. An act of cruelty, committed by an officer on one of these poor men on parade, was re-

venged by one of his comrades, who instantly stabbed the officer with his bayonet. The man contrived to conceal himself, and when all were interrogated with intimidating menaces, the real culprit was sheltered by every one eagerly offering himself up as the perpetrator. By dint of continued severity, some were at last forced into the ranks; others remained firm in their resistance, and were at last suffered to return to their mountains. What the ill-judged harshness of the Elector's officers could not accomplish, has since been effected by the French; and numbers of these sturdy peasants have been drawn into the ranks in the late campaigns. The spirit with which they defended their freedom, is the best proof that they were not wanting in the main qualities of a soldier, when they took up arms by choice.

We did not omit stopping at the little village of Dettingen, about three leagues from Aschaffenburg, celebrated for the battle in which George the Second commanded in person, in 1743. We made inquiries at the little inn, for the field of battle, and the house where our Monarch slept. The

former adjoins the town, but the house, which is still standing, lies at some distance. The moment the lad to whom we addressed our inquiries, understood their object, he ran up stairs to fetch his grandfather, who, he assured us, could tell us all about it. The gouty old gentleman came hobbling down with a tattered printed sheet in his hand, which proved to be an account of the battle, printed at the time — with full details, and long lists of killed, wounded, and taken. The old host preserved this record with great care, and resolutely refused our offers to purchase it — no doubt finding it a lucrative property; for the English, he said, never passed without inquiring about the battle. He assured us, that he remembered well seeing the *König von England* in his red uniform, on a white long tailed horse, — that he was nine years old at the time — consequently now eighty-three — an age quite consistent with his bulky paralytic figure and broken voice.

After leaving Dettingen, the country becomes a rough waste of forest and sand, in the waves of which, drifted by the

wind, the stunted firs are sometimes half buried. The passage through the deep, long, avenues resembles travelling in the snow; you move stilly and slowly on, never exceeding a foot pace. Aschaffenburg appears before you, beautifully situated on a little eminence at the foot of the wooded mountains of the Spessart. Between Dettingen and Aschaffenburg we passed from the Electorate of Hesse Cassel into modern Bavaria. On a terrace covered with shrubs, overlooking the Maine, stands the venerable Castle of Aschaffenburg—a large, red stone edifice, whose slated minaret towers, and grotesque pinnacles and ornaments, present an imposing but incongruous *melange* of every description of architecture. Most of the palaces and public buildings in the neighbourhood, of a few centuries date, display the same impure variety. The Castle, formerly the seat of the Electors of Mayence, and since of the Prince Primate of the Rhenish Confederation, is now the summer residence of the Prince Royal of Bavaria, who keeps here a pleasant little Court. The Princess is an amiable handsome woman,

of the house of Saxe Hilburghausen, sister of the Princess Paul of Wirtemberg, and the Grand Duchess of Nassau. Aschaffenburg is a neat little town, with no other importance than what it acquires from the residence of the Prince's Court, which is complained of by the inhabitants as retired and unostentatious, with none of the life or the splendour of the half ecclesiastical and half civil one of the Prince Primate. The walk which the Prince Primate constructed round the town, called the *Schöne Thal*, (Beautiful Valley,) is an agreeable *memento* of his reign. It is a fine wide promenade, running along the bottom of what appears to have been once the ditch of the ramparts. The sloping sides are covered with plantations, whose luxuriant branches arch thickly above, forming a delightful green vault. This cool promenade nearly makes the circuit of the town, ending in the beautiful shrubberies under the Castle overhanging the river, which something remind one of those at Windsor,

> " Whose hoary sides
> With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
> Access deny."

The inhabitants of the town are Catholics, having always belonged to Catholic Sovereigns. The Prince Primate during his reign preached occasionally there on grand occasions; and according to the taste of the Innkeeper's pretty daughter, His Highness was a *recht schöner prediger*—a right fine preacher. Descending from the terrace on which the Castle stands, we passed the picturesque stone bridge over the Maine towards Darmstadt; visiting in our way a country house and gardens, formerly of the Electors of Mayence, now of the Prince of Bavaria, called *Schöne Busch* (Beautiful Bush.) A long alley of poplars conducted us for a league up to the gardens—the lawns, lakes, wildernesses, and parterres of which, are disposed with much taste and beauty. A crew of noisy grotesque looking figures, were exploring them at the same time, whom we presently recognised for Students from the University, who generally spend their summer vacations in rambling over the country on foot. You never fail to distinguish them by their strange costume and looks, and riotous behaviour. One of the youths,

pursuing the same route with ourselves, joined us. He was a handsome lad of eighteen, whose long hair flowing on his shoulders, uncravated neck, and quaint red cap with the Bavarian cockade, and knapsack at his back, did not quite so ill become his pretty face and figure, as the awkward, full-grown men whom you often meet similarly disfigured. He was studying physic at Wurtzburg—an University of some repute; and now making a peregrination to Bensheim in the Berg-strasse, on a visit to his friends,—anticipating with much glee the delights of a waltz at Auerbach—a favourite place of bourgeois rendezvous—on the next Sunday evening. With his knotty stick, and light brown jerkin and trowsers, and pipe in his mouth, he swung on at a gay pace, which we, who were not so much used to pedestrian performances of ten leagues a day, were sometimes obliged to check. His little gourd bottle of brandy and water, dangling at his button hole, was every now and then applied to his mouth, as he vented a *million sacraments* on the heat—the Germans always adding emphasis to their oaths by numerical process—

and a *hundred thousand million sacraments* being the ordinary climax of rage. For six leagues of sand we trudged on in a hot sun, through a noble forest, sometimes of fir, sometimes of rich beeches and oaks, enlivened by our gay young companion, to Diburg—a mean little town, which presented the first habitations we had seen since Aschaffenburg. Our Student, who was an economical traveller, took us to the worst inn in the place, where he flounced down his knapsack on the table, and shook hands with Madame Klenck, the pretty landlady,—who acknowledged him as an old acquaintance—and was soon relating his swaggering tale to the gaping peasants lounging over the kitchen table.

After refreshing ourselves by a sprawling nap on the benches of the black dirty inn, and a dinner of bread-soup, sausages, and bad Burgundy, we proceeded towards Darmstadt; again entering a fine forest of oak and beech, through the arched shades of which the high road rambled in picturesque irregularity. Long green vistas occasionally opened on each side, cut for the convenience both of hunting and carting wood,

and affording short communicating passages to those sufficiently versed in the mazes of the wood, not to fear the fate of the fair Sister in Comus. The mail-cart to Aschaffenburg, passed us toiling through the ruts at a foot pace — the wood echoing to the cracking whip of the post-boy, who was laughing cheek-by-jowl with a heavy peasant girl he had taken up to beguile the journey. Epistolary correspondence, as you may judge from the character of this Mercury, does not travel in Germany quite at the rate of the Bristol mail — that happy invention for bringing bills of exchange and lovers' vows speedily to hand. A letter is sometimes ten days in travelling from Hanover to Frankfort; and one which we wrote to Germany from the Netherlands as our *avant courier*, brought to some friends the pleasing intelligence of our approach, when we had been enjoying their company about three weeks. We arrived at Darmstadt on Saturday evening — in time for the Court chapel the next morning, the Court dinner at noon, and the grand Opera in the evening — the invariable Sunday occupations of the gay world in the little capitals.

LETTER VI.

The quantity of forests, and their importance as sources of revenue, render the Department of Forest and Hunting a considerable branch in the machinery of the little governments. The Forest Masters of the districts are high offices, to which nobility is a necessary passport, as also to that of *Gentilhomme de la Chasse, (Jagd Junker)*—an ornamental character, who, in a green military uniform, adorns the Prince's suite, on state occasions.

I made a visit, in company with the young Princes of Hesse and their Governor, to a young friend, just promoted from *Gentilhomme de la Chasse* to Assistant Forest Master, in the district of Lorsch near Worms. Driving for a few leagues along the beautiful Berg-strasse, we came to Bensheim—a small old town, whose massy walls and portals give it an air of ancient consequence,

now fallen into the hands of peasants and tobacco-driers. The town stands agreeably at the foot of a bold mountain, surrounded by gardens and orchards, which give to the whole Berg-strasse, its air of luxuriant fertility. The Berg-strasse or Mountain Road, is a fine *chaussee*, stretching from Darmstadt to Heidelberg,—on the left, the wooded and vine-covered range of mountains, with their old castles, forming the boundary of the Odenwald, runs parallel with the road immediately above it. On the right stretches a vast sandy flat, through which the Rhine wanders—bounded by the heights of Tonnerre and the Vosges, at 50 or 60 miles distance. The villages and towns on the road are beautifully situated at the foot of the mountains—overhung by vineyards, and embosomed in orchards, which extend in cheerful avenues along the road, from one town to another. The country is one continued garden, which for its romantic luxuriance, was accused by the Emperor Joseph, of aping the beauties of Italy.

Leaving the road here, we drove over the plain, towards the quaint slated belfries of Lorsch, which announced the an-

cient scite of one of the most considerable princely Abbeys in Germany; a centre from whence civilization first spread itself in the neighbouring wilds of the Odenwald. Numerous crucifixes by the road side, also told us that we had entered a Catholic district. A mouldering fragment of the lofty nave of the church is still standing, but degraded into a useful out-building to the house of the Master of the Forests, which has usurped the scite of the cloister; and the humbled Catholics of Lorsch, are driven to hear mass in a shabby parochial church, whose disgusting daubs of *Ecce Homo* and Crucifixions are well calculated to awe ignorant superstition.

It was Sunday — and the peasants in their old-fashioned blue coats, and best cocked hats, with their wives in neat blue gowns, descending just below the knee, with tapering waists and protuberant hips, were returning from church, and surrounded us, to take a half inquisitive, stare at their little future Sovereign, as we descended from the carriage. Their obsolete costume, grave, set, physiognomies, and erect figures, had a character of primitive quaint-

ness, which might have made one forget their connexion with this lively age, and take them for their worthy great grandfathers, and great grandmothers, a century ago. Our friend, the *Gentilhomme de la Chasse*, was established at the house of a menial Chasseur, who announced his creed by a little virgin in full attire of lace and roses, over his door. We climbed by a stair-case, considerably resembling a ladder, to his apartments, comfortably furnished, hung with hunting prints, and a complete assortment of guns, sabres, *couteaux de chasse*, horns, and other *insignia* of his calling. In the true spirit of a sportsman, his horses and groom were far better lodged — in well appointed stables, decorated with stags' horns. After taking chocolate, we explored the village, or rather the little dirty walled town — listened to details of hair-breadth 'scapes from wild boars, and to some explanations of forest economy and customs.

The greatest part of the forests in the little States are domain lands of the Prince; and as there is no other fuel in the country, they are cultivated with great care, thinned and cut periodically and systematically, and

not converted in too large quantities into corn country. In some of the larger States, such as Bavaria and Wurtemberg, they export considerable quantities of wood to Holland, by the Rhine, and the little rivers that join it; but from Hesse little or none at all. The policy of a German State is generally to make itself as independent as possible of its neighbours, by producing within itself all the necessaries of life. It therefore endeavours to keep up such a proportion between its wood and corn country as to be sufficiently supplied with both. The Forests which belong to subjects are also cut, and arranged under the direction of the Masters of Forests, the owners not being entrusted with their management, lest they might cut them down, or suffer them to deteriorate — an interference with individual property worthy of little despotisms. The Forest Revenues of the Grand Duke of Hesse produce 600,000 florins a year (between 50 and 60,000*l.*) The offices of the Noble Forest Masters are rarely worth more than 3 or 4000 florins a year — no inconsiderable stipend

for the servants of a German Prince.—They have a house provided in their district, where the authority of their office, and the circumstance of being frequently the only gentry in the country, gives them a provincial consequence, something between that of a feudal Lord and a modern Squire.

On another visit to Lorsch we paid our respects to the Upper Forest Master, to whom our friend was attached—residing in a dismal house, in a dirty yard, which had about the exterior respectability, without the snug solid comfort, of an English farm-house. We were hospitably received by the Baron—a good-natured man, fond of his rude profession, which had rusticated the courtier into a rough gentleman—a great smoker—speaking little French, and seldom making his appearance at Court, but to congratulate his Prince on his birth-day or his *jour de fête*. His wife [redacted] an elegant domestic woman—with the exception of occasional visits to the Court or to Frankfort, passes her time contentedly in this secluded, but not picturesque village, surrounded by peasants, woods, and wild boars. The party was enlivened by a relation of the Baron's, a

gallant Knight of the Bath, in our Hanoverian service, who spoke English, and whose character of a fellow-subject of George the Third, gave him half the interest of a compatriot.

After drinking tea, and eating home-made cakes, talking bad German with the Baron, and French with his more polished lady, we took leave, in order to pay our respects early in the morning to the wild tenants of the forest. Our friend, who resigned his bed to one of the party, amused himself the live-long night throughout, by playing duets on his horn with his servant, who had received instructions, *tout exprés*, to accompany his master; while I took some broken slumbers at the village inn, disturbed every half hour by inharmonious blasts from the horn of the watchman, who, as the morning advanced, additionally bawled out the hour, *vivâ voce*, accompanied by a quaint German reprimand and exhortation to the snoring villagers.

At three o'clock, our friend appeared under our window, equipped for the *chasse*. We walked through a league of sand with our bags and guns, with a Chasseur, to the

Forest; where, after waiting an hour for dawn in listening to the distant matins bell of Worms Cathedral, we commenced our walk round the outer alleys to intercept the game —if game there should be—returning from their repast in the fields. Sport, however, did not favour us—and, after a romantic parading in the dew, without an opportunity of firing, we returned with the consolation of having seen a small roe—and heard many more. This sort of *chasse*, (a more dignified name for what we call shooting,) is called the *Buschgang*; and is precarious and tedious enough. It is the commencement of the German sportsman's day—which the bad success of this first essay little inclined us to prosecute in its subsequent acts. Our friend, who has more patience and enthusiasm, rises from his sound slumber three or four times a week, for the forlorn hope of a shot once in four or five mornings.

The other most ordinary *chasse*, called the *Track*, takes place in the middle of the day. The sportsmen are stationed along one side of a wood, at the other end of which the peasants entering, beat

through it, driving out the game, which the sportsmen shoot at, as they pass. In case of their escaping wounded, hounds are used to hunt them down. The sportsmen keep up the pursuit, on horseback, till the thickness of the forest obliges them to force a scrambling passage on foot. When the wild boar turns and attacks the hunter, he slips his *Couteau de chasse* from his girdle, and, the boar approaching him, sticks him with it, adroitly, in the throat. If he misses, the boar probably returns the intended compliment with his tusks.

A cowardly sort of butchering is sometimes practised by a collection of Princes, without sportsman-like taste. A well stocked preserve is besieged on all sides by troops of chasseurs, &c. who drive the game into a small space inclosed by nets, where the illustrious hunters, with their attendants in gala uniforms, murder and wound them from their pavilions, with as much ease, and I should conceive, as little gratification, as a man might shoot hogs and geese in a farm yard. The late King of Wirtemberg was a great sportsman in this style — and with the Count of Erbach, and other *ama-*

teurs, never failed to offer up Hecatombs of the motley inhabitants of the Forest. These exploits — which were equally the terror of the wild boars, and the country boors, whose crops were little respected — are recorded by the Court Painters, in highly-finished pieces, with portraits of the dignified hunters.

Our want of sport was, in some degree, supplied to our friend by the chace of a poor poacher — an animal pursued by the Chasseurs with as much inveteracy as game. He luckily saved himself, by escaping, from a sentence of long imprisonment, or hard labour, which would have visited his offence, if taken. A perpetual warfare is kept up between the huntsmen and these depredators; not long before, one of the former had been shot by a poacher in the wood we visited. The poachers are excluded from the protection of the law of murder; and a Chasseur may shoot at one of them in the forest, with as much impunity as at a stag. It is not surprising to find this severity in German game laws, since, in a country, where feudal customs are far more completely obliterated, the laws rela-

ting to game are not without traces of the system. We returned to breakfast at Lorsch, not ill-prepared by fatigue and bad sport. Our friend went to bed to make up for his nocturnal vigils; and we left him to the enjoyment of his day-dreams and sleep in a hot sun-shine — not without some laughs at the singularity of his life and the toilsomeness of German hunting.

To go back to our former visit, — on returning, an excellent dinner awaited us in our friend's apartment. Rice soup, (a meagre but frequent dish in a German dinner,) venison from the forest, and crawfish from the little river in the village, formed part of the bill of fare. The venison is generally the flesh of the stag, which is stronger and higher flavoured, but not so delicate as that of park deer. Champagne and Rhenish were not wanting during our repast, and, as usual, were succeeded immediately after by coffee with the desert; for the Germans, though not invariably sober, have little idea of the conviviality of a *friendly bottle.* Their drinking is mere boozing — often solitary and silent — and, from the lightness of their wine,

capable of being continued for a long time, without any very indecorous result. Though a lady was of the party, we therefore did not perplex our friend by inquiring for his drawing-room; but contrived to enjoy much mirth and good spirits, with a tenth part of the inspiriting liquids which a similar friendly meeting would have consumed in England. The young Princes, who are brought up with simplicity and good sense, enjoyed themselves like true boys — eating voraciously — playing with the guns and horses — exploring the stables, and keeping the attention of their Governor constantly on the alert; the result of which was, that like true boys, fatigued with the pleasures of the day, they slept all the way home to Darmstadt. The Prince Louis, the eldest, is a fine manly lad, who with great simplicity, gives symptoms of a decided character.

When we took leave of our hospitable friend, it was a clear, sultry, summer's evening. The vineyards and woods on the Berg-strasse mountains, were clothed with brilliant rich hues as we approached them. The bell was sounding for Vespers

at Lorsch; and the peasants were in motion, either towards the church, or loitering about in the enjoyment of rest. The villages in the Berg-strasse as we passed through them, were all alive, in the gay celebration of Sunday evening. Parties of beaux and belles, above the lower orders, were either returning early from some place of gay rendezvous, or lounging in the shade of the fruit trees, which make the road a continued avenue. The beer-houses were overflowing with peasants; and the places of genteeler resort, with smoking beaux and laughing belles, refreshing themselves after a wander in the vineyards and the neighbouring mountains. — The German ceremony of taking off the hat as we passed, kept our hands and hats in continual activity to return the obeisances, with which all ranks gravely salute each other on the road. We arrived at Darmstadt as the sun set with a magnificent blaze, behind the dark pine forests in the plain.

LETTER VII.

I MADE the other day a short excursion into the Odenwald (*the wood of Odin*) — a wild and interesting district extending about ten leagues from Darmstadt to the Neckar in length, and from the Berg-strasse to the Maine in breadth. We posted as far as Heppenheim — a small village under the mountains on the Berg-strasse, which so much resembles all the villages on this beautiful road, that to describe one is to describe all. They are generally situated at the opening of a narrow valley in the chain of woody mountains. A rapid stream descends through this opening by a winding valley from the mountainous Odenwald, rattling along the village street — the village housewives washing their cloaths — the children playing — and the ducks and geese dabbling in its limpid course.

We took a *bot* or guide at Heppenheim,

and pursued on foot the course of the little stream, which came brawling through the narrow valley between two high shelving mountains, covered with trim vineyards, or luxuriant beech woods. The mountain on the right, at the mouth of the valley, is crowned by the mouldering walls of the old castle of Starkenburg—one of the most considerable of the many ruins along the Berg-strasse chain. The castle was built in 1066 by an old Abbot of Lorsch, as a bulwark against the attacks of his rival, a Bishop of Bremen, who coveted the Abbot's fat monastery. In later years it fell into the hands of the Elector of Mayence, and was the residence of a Burgrave, and a Garrison, giving its name of Starkenburg (Strong Castle) to the surrounding county of Starkenburg now comprised in the Grand Duchy of Hesse.

After proceeding up the valley for some distance, we crossed the fields, gradually ascending a hill, from whence the wild, rich, scenes of the Odenwald with their forests and mountains lay before us as far as the eye could reach. We appeared now in an entirely new world. The intermin-

able plain of sands and fir forests stretching on the west side of the Berg-strasse mountains, now gave place to a rich diversified scene — presenting a continual succession of abrupt mountain and dale, forest and corn country. With all its cultivated fertility, the rugged mountains, the luxuriance of the beech forests which cover them, the masses of granite stuck in the slopes of every hill, and the rough rocky roads impassable to any but pedestrians, give an air of sequestered wildness to the country which adds much to its interest. The whole scene for thirty miles each way has the air of a chaos of hills thrown one against another in picturesque irregularity. The valleys between them are deep and romantic — dotted with spires and smoking villages whose pastures and orchards are watered by streams from the mountains which find a rambling passage through the valleys towards the Rhine.

The soil no longer a meagre sand, is infinitely richer than that of the plains below the mountainous district — and it is cultivated with a proportionate care. The small farms of from ten to fifty acres, are tilled

by the peasants to whom they belong. Their farming establishment consists of a small cottage, the exterior better and cleaner than the interior, a hovel used for a barn, a home-built waggon, and two or three small fawn-coloured cows, which supply the dairy, and do the work of horses. The light waggons drawn by these handsome little animals, climbing the sides of the hills, driven by the peasant in his cocked hat and blue jerkin, pleasingly enliven the landscape. The cows and oxen draw by the horns and forehead, a mode which the Germans assert is easier than drawing on the shoulder.

In spite of these Arcadian scenes and this Arcadian mode of life, I am sorry to say my friends the Odenwalders are not renowned for a romantic virtue. Half the crimes of the Grand Duchy are said to be committed by them; and the *Gens d'armes* generally make their first searches in their wild woods and valleys. But their country affords so excellent a shelter, that they have probably gained credit for furnishing some delinquents whom they only concealed.

At two long leagues from Heppenheim we descended to a small village called Furth—its dirty street watered by the little river Weschnitz, which rises on one of the highest points in the Odenwald, and whose name the antiquaries rather circuitously derive from a God Visucius, to whom an inscribed stone was erected near its source. We entered here the first little *Wirth's Haus*, (a low inn,) denoted by the usual withered bush over the door. The kitchen, a black dirty room, with a stove in one corner—the floor caked with dirt—was crowded with peasants lounging over their *chioppine* (pint) of sour Berg-strasse wine. Beer is very bad, and little drunk in these wine districts. Those, who cannot afford grape wine, drink, in summer, *apfel wein*, (apple wine,) a flat muddy cider; and in winter a frequent *schnapps* (dram) of a cheap sort of gin. To this feeble and deleterious beverage, and the quantities of sour black bread which they devour, the sallow unhealthy looks of the German peasants are perhaps, in some degree, to be attributed. You constantly see stout square-built fellows, equal to any labour,

with pale cheeks, dim eyes, and all the air of invalids. The sun, which in the sandy fields is extremely powerful, rarely gives men or women the ruddy brown, which seems the peasant's natural colour. The blood seems cold in their veins — their animal life appears dull — and they have none of that over-flowing health natural to their occupations, and which helps to vivify character.

Having refreshed ourselves with some wine soup, and taken another guide, we walked on another league to Lindenfels, — The road winds up to the village, at first through well cultivated fields of corn and vegetables; afterwards through a fine wood of beeches. The women were working in the fields, and the woods resounded with the cracking whips of the boys keeping their cows on the sides of the hills. Lindenfels is one of the most romantic spots in the Odenwald — perched on the apex of a conical hill, surrounded on all sides by deep glens, their sides covered with luxuriant forests, sloping pastures, and orchards of walnut and apple. The hill by which you ascend forms a sort

of false breast-work to Lindenfels itself. When you are nearly on the summit of the former, the castle seems almost within a stone's throw: but a few minutes ascent discovers that Lindenfels is on a detached hill, separated by a deep valley, round the edge of which it is necessary to wind half a mile to the village. The old ruin of the Castle crowns the highest part of the mountain, above the little town. It is a mass of rough wall, in which one discovers vestiges of a large octangular tower, and an outer rampart. The village—like so many others in the neighbourhood of an equally picturesque exterior—is dirty and miserable in the extreme. The *amt-mann*, or bailiff, lives in a large dismal house, in a court-yard, with great gates: his gardens sloping beautifully down the sides of the hill. The *amt-mann* is the Grand Seigneur of the little district; and dispenses justice among the peasants, and those who are not entitled by birth to seek it at a higher source. These offices, which are of some emolument and influence, are filled by men of no birth or consequence, and who belong to about the third ranks of the *bourgeoisie*.

Our long walk, and the ascent of the mountain, disposed us to be by no means fastidious as to the accommodation of the inn — a miserable black hole, full of filth and wretchedness. It, however, furnished a good supper of milk, and bread, and butter; and beds, in which, though none of the cleanest, we slept with all the luxury of fatigue.

The next morning early, under the auspices of a new *bot*, a neat little peasant girl, with her trim blue frock and straight combed hair, we directed our course towards the Berg-strasse, in order to regain it near the Melibocus mountain. Our walk lay through scenery of the same description as the day before; along a rough, irregular path, ascending and descending; winding through woods of beech, or rich orchards; and at the brow of a hill occasionally agreeably surprised by a picturesque village lying immediately beneath us. The village stream, after being conducted with much management through artificial sluices and troughs far above its bed, frequently turns a gigantic, rude mill-wheel, of a construction more picturesque than ingenious.

The sides of the hills were still chequered with masses of granite, of all shapes, and immense size; sometimes lying so thick as to form a sort of sea of rock; at others scattered here and there in the corn-fields. In the woods of tall young beech, where the grey masses are not less frequent, and covered with green moss, their appearance is still more striking.

In the Odenwald, the great granites, which are called the ribs of the Earth, lie scattered about on the sandy surface, like wrecks of some storm of the elements. The whole country, which is abruptly irregular and diversified, and displays more of what has been called the beautiful deformity of nature, than is often to be seen, affords traces of severe convulsions of nature. Even the vast plains of sand through which the Rhine runs, from Basle to Bingen, have hardly the character of her ordinary features. Skeletons and bones of gigantic animals, have been found in the flats of Darmstadt, and are preserved in the Grand Duke's Museum. These circumstances add to the interest of a country — they appear to bring one more forcibly into contact

with nature's primæval features. The great granites, lying useless in the fertile fields, defying the power of man, are so many pleasing mementos of her supremacy — which, in these days of advancement, art appears continually to be questioning.

After breakfasting, for about five-pence, on eggs and milk, at the pretty little village of Gadenheim, we walked on to Reichenbach, a larger village, in a fine valley, the residence of a pastor. We procured with difficulty rough peasants' nags, to ride to Auerbach, the nearest village on the Berg-strasse. The ride was romantic, in the highest degree; the road following the course of the stream, which watered Reichenbach, and had now swollen into rattling importance. A rich valley of pasture, sunk between irregular mountains, presented points of view of constantly varying beauty, in which a sequestered wildness was unusually mixed with smiling fertility. Schönberg, a village with an old chateau, belonging to the Count of Erbach, a mediatized Prince, now subject to the Grand Duke of Hesse, — is the most beautiful spot on the road.

The mountains on each side, majestic in their cloathing of beeches and firs, have here assumed a bolder character, and nod at each other across the valley at no great distance. On the edge of the most abrupt, nearly perpendicular, and called the *Altanberg*, stands the Castle of the Count; his plantations sloping down the gentler parts of the declivity. The village lies in the valley, by the side of the brook; and the road winds steeply up to the castle, passing through the outer court.

From Schönberg, we descended to the deep valley of Auerbach, which, for its mineral waters, its delightful walks and points of view, was chosen by the Grand Duke and Duchess of Hesse for a place of summer retirement. A gravel road winds up the valley, through rows of poplars, from the village, to the cluster of small white buildings of the Court. The sides of the mountains immediately round are laid out in shrubbery walks, with seats and summer-houses, from which one catches a view of the village beneath, and, through the opening of the valley, of the wide plain of the Rhine.

A fortnight ago I spent a delightful day at Auerbach, in company with a party of agreeable friends. The Chamberlain of the Count lent us the keys of the Court buildings, in which we enjoyed a merry pic-nic dinner, in which the omelets made on the spot by the hands of a pretty French Countess and German Baroness, and the champagne of a jovial Bavarian Plenipotentiary, were not the least agreeable ingredients. Another part of the party, to whom a residence in England had given predilections for the *cuisine anglaise*, had provided good roast beef and English apple pudding, on which our foreign friends abundantly retaliated the justice rendered to their national cookery. Some of our grave friends would have frowned, and some wondrous clever ones smiled, at our unrestrained abandonment to the *dulce est desipere in loco* at Auerbach. A sunny day, animating scenery, agreeable ladies, and the resolution to be happy, with which, like London cockneys on a party to Hampstead, we had set out in the morning, made fun and merriment — nonsense, if you will — the presiding guests of the entertainment. We

lounged about the plantations, sat down in the grottoes, admired the rich vineyards and the mountains, explored the Court apartments, laughed at the sentimental scandal attached to one room, and the romantic adventures connected with another, and dined with a mixture of appetite and gaiety which made the good things eaten *almost* as numerous as those said. A gay French friend, (whose gaiety, is his least estimable quality,) though never out of his element, was more than usually in it here. Without the smallest affectation of wit, he had something smart and graceful for ever on the tip of his tongue. He never *cracked a joke* and stopped to laugh at it — a species of vivacity often anything but animating: but his conversation and spirits glided on in the same sparkling flow, acting like a cordial to the spirits of the party. The day ended as such days usually do. The sun was getting down before any one was aware of it; and, on consulting watches, the hours were found to be fairly laughed away — and the Castle on the mountain not yet visited: that would do for another day. The ladies feared the damps of

the evening; the carriages were ready; and we did not separate in getting into them without promising ourselves another visit to Auerbach — a promise, of course, made to be broken.

No traveller who passes the Berg-strasse should omit exploring the beauties of Auerbach—one of its most picturesque villages. The neat white church, with its slated spire, stands on a little grassy ledge, on one of the vineyard mountains that overhang the village. The mountain on the other side rises more boldly—covered half way up with vines trained with the greatest care, and crowned by a thick copse and beech wood, out of which rise the tall towers, and battlemented ruins of Auerbach Castle. The Castle, which tradition says was built by Charlemagne, was, in later days, the residence of the Counts of Catzenellenbogen, whose territory came by marriage to the Landgraves of Hesse Darmstadt. The ruin is still black from the storming by the French in the last war. It resembles in architecture and situation those which abound in the neighbourhood. Tall round turrets, so thin as to have the appearance of

columns at a distance, with a battlemented head, sometimes round, sometimes octangular, are the most picturesque and perfect parts of the ruin. Almost every mountain on the Berg-strasse, and many of those in the Odenwald, are crowned by one of these relics of the days of knighthood, which, embosomed in the woods of beech, or surrounded by vineyards, adds the interest of its associations to the charm of the landscape.

We slept at Auerbach, at a good inn—the scene of a grand assembly every Sunday evening of the *Badauds* of Darmstadt and the beaux and belles of the whole neighbourhood—at which waltzing and smoking are the never-failing resources.

Passing once on a Sunday evening, the windows were open, and the whole house appeared alive. I descended and walked up stairs—the saloon was one cloud of smoke—Some fiddlers were playing in the little gallery above, and twenty or thirty couple of almost all ages, dresses, and ranks, excepting the very low and the very high, were in full whirl to a quick waltz; while several couples were reposing from their

exertions in the windows—the men wiping their faces and puffing tobacco — the belles adjusting their drooping curls. The first person I saw was a little Pastor, whom I knew, with a pipe as long as his arm in his mouth—being the walking-stick (convertible, at will, into that indispensable companion) with which he had walked four leagues after service from his cure, to celebrate Sunday evening, according to the German manner. The fondness for the pleasures of these assemblies sometimes even gets the better of that aristocratic decorum for which the higher Germans are remarkable; and a Princess, too well known to be named, has been known to join in them with as much gaiety as a plebeian belle.

From Auerbach we proceeded early in the morning on horseback, accompanied by a peasant guide to the Melibocus—the king of the Berg-strasse Mountains, and one of the loftiest in this part of Germany.

Leaving the Berg-strasse at Zwingenberg, a village under the mountains, with a dismal old residence of the Counts of Erbach, we passed by a bye-road to Alsbach — a

little village situated beautifully at the foot of the Melibocus. Having here procured a guide, with a key of the tower on the top, we entered the thick Forest of beeches, ascending by a steep and difficult path which did not, however, oblige us to dismount. Our nags, being true German animals, passed, with all the *sang froid* of their master trudging by their side, the startling openings in the forest, which occasionally let in a view of the vast plain low beneath us. The mountain is nearly conical, and its fine vesture of rich beech foliage, here and there relieved by a few dark firs, gives to it an air of apparelled majesty; which the white tower, on the top, glistening in the sun, renders more conspicuous at a distance. The view from this tower, is one of the noblest and most extensive in Europe, owing to the flatness of the valley of the Rhine below. It was about seven in the morning when we arrived on the summit—the vapours from the Rhine, and the streams in the valleys, were hanging about the woody mountains and obscuring the scenes in the distance. As the sun gradually dispersed the mist, the spires and villages

in the plain lay, one after another, clear and glittering beneath us. The distant objects came one by one into view—Spires and Manheim to the left—Worms and its Gothic cathedral opposite—and Mayence lower down. The tower is built on the edge of the declivity. The plains below, with their pine forests and cultivated sands, and the villages of the Berg-strasse, which we had just left, appeared immediately beneath us. We traced the course of the Rhine which now glittered in the sun, and appeared little removed from the base of the mountain—though at four leagues distance—from above Manheim, almost to Bingen—a distance of nearly 60 miles, where it loses itself in the Rhingan Mountains which bound the view on that side. The course of the Neckar and its junction with the Rhine is very visible, as also that of the Maine. A good telescope is kept in the tower, by the help of which, in a clear day, we were told, you might distinguish the tower of Strasburg Cathedral, at a distance of above 100 English miles. On the opposite side, towards the north, the view reaches the mountains in the neighbour-

hood of Giessen, in northern Hesse, sixty miles distant. To the east lies the Odenwald, over the chaotic hills of which the prospect stretches as far as the vicinity of Wurtzburg — a distance of sixty or seventy miles; while on the west, across the Rhine, it is bounded by the Mont Tonnerre and the Vosges Mountains, at a nearly equal distance. We descended delighted with this noble prospect, after having inscribed our names in the travellers' book in the tower, in which we recognized some few of our compatriots.

LETTER VIII.

Another excursion which I made to the Odenwald deserves describing, from the curiosity of its object — the Riesensäule, or Giant's Column — a large well-proportioned pillar of granite lying in a wood on the summit of the Feldsberg Mountain, one of the highest and wildest in the Odenwald. In company with a German friend, we drove as far as Seeheim in a droski — a light Russian carriage, on which you ride astride, much used in this part of the world. Our road lay through one of the sandy forests of light coloured pines, with tall bare trunks, which in summer contrasted with the richness of other foliage have a dim dull appearance — but surrounded by brown leafless woods, acquire a warm aspect in the winter landscape.

Seeheim is a pretty village under the Berg-strasse Mountains, with a neat little

pleasure-house and gardens of the Grand Duke of Hesse, on a pleasant terrace overlooking the valley, at the opening of which the village stands. If you discover, from the road, any white building surrounded by a few shrubs and pretending to the character of a rural box, you may safely set the owner down for a prince. A nobleman's country seat, or even an old chateau that is tenantable, are very rare objects; and a German village, in fact, a little stinking paved town—is too miserable to be the residence of anything like gentry. All flock to the Residence Town; and the country is abandoned to the peasants, whose habitations are clustered together into small walled villages. The more populous ones containing an old town-house, a market-place, and a couple of churches, are occupied by little shopkeepers, mechanics, tobacco manufacturers, &c. The grandees here are the Bailiffs of the district, the pastor, sometimes an *avocat* or *schreiber*, and the little provincial *employés* whose titles and airs are so happily pictured in Kotzebue's farce of "The little German Townsmen;" the scene of which

is laid in the respectable borough of *Krähwinkel*, alias Crow Corner. The airs of his *dramatis personæ*, *Mrs. Under-tax-gatheress*, *Mr. Building-Mine-and-Road-Inspector's-Substitute*, &c. &c. are not wanting in the Krähwinkels of southern Germany.

At Seeheim we had an agreeable rencontre with the pretty *Prima Donna* of the Darmstadt opera, who arriving for an excursion of pleasure, with the usual state of a Court equipage, condescended to be highly interesting and amusing in our walk round the gardens. In the Grand Duchy of Hesse, owing to the theatrical taste of the Prince, singers, actors, and *id genus omne*, may be ranked among the privileged classes. Not to speak of the Grand Duke's arm in returning from the opera, and his privy purse, which are often at the service of the Prima Donna—the whole *corps dramatique* have—in common with the Prince's Chamberlain and his Butcher, his Prime Minister and his Body Tailor, and other dignitaries of the state—the privilege of making free use of their sovereign's stud; and the *Stall Meister* (Equerry) has orders not to refuse their drafts, *ad libitum*, for nags

for their high travelling necessities. Thus, when you meet on the road the dashing court carriages, with laced liveries and long tailed horses, the contents often turn out to be — *Mademoiselle la Figurante* taking an airing with *Monsieur le Primo Buffo*.

Leaving our *droski* at Seeheim, we followed a path across the fields to Jugenheim — a pretty village under the mountain, at the entrance of a romantic valley. A thick fog unfortunately obscured many of its beauties, but did not entirely conceal the rough rocks of granite and red almond stone, half covered with brushwood, between which a brook rapidly descended the sloping valley, sometimes turning a solitary mill, or rattling in cascades over its rocky bed. The slopes of the mountains on each side covered either with wood or cornfields, were half hid in the fog, which gave to the valley a gloomy stillness. In following the narrow path we came to a little hamlet with a small chapel — opposite the cottage doors the women were beating the seeds of dried hemp on a machine, with which they hacked the straw till the seeds flew out. Here we took a path across the

fields at the foot of the Feldsberg, which we began soon rapidly to mount, and having gained half the height, a brilliant blue sky appeared through the fog, which on reaching the summit we had left entirely beneath us—involving the whole country in a sea of hoary mist. The points of the highest mountains in the Odenwald appeared like wooded islands in the ocean around them. The sides of the steep Feldsberg are covered with a beech wood, at the skirts of which, on the summit of the mountain, stands the lonely lodge of a Chasseur, in a well-cultivated cornfield.

The fatigue of ascending rendered the repose by no means unwelcome which we found in a neat room hung with guns and pictures of stags; and the excellent home-made bread, butter, and cheese, with a bottle of Rhenish wine afforded us by the *Jäger*'s wife, were not less acceptable. During our meal she entertained us with a description of the complete blockade in which they are kept by the snow through the winter, which obliges them to lay in provisions sufficient to weather out several months without com-

munication with the villages in the valley. On the top of the mountain they have no sparrows, and few birds, except swallows.

The *Riesensäule* lies in a wood on the declivity of the mountain. Descending a narrow winding path, conducted by the Jäger's little girl, the great column presently lay before us, half buried in thick brushwood, in a hollow made by its own weight. It is above thirty feet long and about four in greatest diameter — nearly cylindrical, and tapering with an exact proportion. At one end a sort of semicircular step is cut, apparently either to fit it to some other stone, or to fix machinery for moving it. The granite is of the hard dark description, of which all the masses in the neighbourhood are composed. The appearance of this gigantic and well-finished column, whose perennial hardness has remained for centuries, without a trace of the effects of time, is extremely striking. One little expects so singular a vestige of the power and ingenuity of man in a wild sequestered scene where its use and object are unaccountable. The column has excited much speculation in

Germany. The magnificent Elector Palatine Charles Theodore, would fain have brought it down from the mountain to grace his capital Manheim: but it was too massy and weighty for removal entire, and the stone baffled the saws of his workmen who, in attempting to cut it, have left on it two insignificant incisions in evidence of their failure. Kotzebue, who has sprinkled ink upon almost every imaginable subject, proposed that it should be erected on the field of Leipsic, in memory of the victory — a scheme easier to propose than to execute; — without considering that the Grand Duke of Hesse, to whom it now belongs, though a very patriotic German, would hardly admire furnishing a monument to commemorate a battle in which his son and his troops were beaten and taken prisoners.

Not far off the column lies an immense rough block of granite, with a complete step cut in it, and a deep incision made by a saw above, as if the commencement of another. It goes by the name of the Giant's Altar. Scattered about in the wood near, are many other blocks with si-

milar traces of workmanship—some of them presenting in the incisions the marks of wedges as perfect as if recently made. Some antiquaries have attributed the column, and these vestiges of art, to a commencement of the ancient Germans to erect a temple to their god Odin, who gives its name to this wild district: but is it likely that the good Germans, in the days when they worshipped Thor and Odin, were proficients in the art of hewing granite, which their enlightened descendants of the eighteenth century can barely scratch? Others ascribe the work to the middle ages: but there appears more reason in giving the credit of it to the Romans, who were established in this part of Germany for near three hundred years, and vestiges of whose encampments, &c. abound every where in the Odenwald, which formed part of the *Agri Decumates*. Of this latter opinion—in common with many German *savans*—was a sort of village antiquary from the neighbourhood, who was loitering among the granites with his rule and spade, and reasoned to me in Germanized French on the depth and shape of this and that incision, con-

necting his ocular discoveries with historical data about the legions of the Emperor Commodus, &c. &c. which he always summed up with a "*Foila, Monsieur, ce qui she pense.*"

On pursuing the declivity a little lower, you come to a work of nature no less remarkable than that of art you have just left — the *Felsen Meer*, or Sea of Rocks; a name which accurately describes the object. A sort of channel in the side of the mountain is filled with piles of huge granites, heaped one on the other in the rudest disorder. The singularity of the object is increased by the roundness of the rocks, which, unlike the mossy angular masses in the neighbourhood, are here bare and rounded off, as if by attrition — like pebbles on the sea shore. The hollow position of the masses gives to the whole pile, which extends a considerable way down the mountain, the character of an avalanche of rocks, hurled by a convulsion of nature from the summit into their present situation. Superstition, however, which is the same among all people, has here unconsciously hit upon the poetical fable which it sug-

gested to a very different race, and ascribes them to certain Giants, who, in fighting together, threw them at each other.

A country like the Odenwald has not failed to suggest to a people like the Germans many traditions equally romantic. At no great distance from the Feldsberg is the Castle of Rodenstein, on the top of a shaggy mountain. Here, as the tale goes, resides the Knight of Rodenstein, or the wild *Jäger*, who, issuing from his ruins, announces the approach of war by traversing the air with a noisy armament, to the opposite Castle of Schnellerts. The strange noises heard on the eve of battles, are authenticated on the spot by affidavits; and some persons profess to have been convinced by their eyes as well as their ears. In this way the people were forewarned of the victories of Leipsic and Waterloo. This superstition reminds one of the wilder one of the inhabitants of the plains near the Andes, who fancy a thunder-storm a battle between their enemies and themselves, and hail with shouts of joy the motion of the clouds towards their enemies' country as the signal of their flight and defeat. The

flying army of Rodenstein may probably be owing to as simple a cause as the aerial battles of the Araucanians. The power of the wind is very great, and its roar solemn in these great districts of forest. In the pine forests it sometimes tears up thousands of trees in a night; a havock which has in some of the little Courts, suppressed the old and honourable office of *Grand Veneur*, or Grand Master of the forests and hunting, whose emoluments consisted of all the trees blown down. These, with a moderate patronage from Boreas, sometimes produced the dignitary from 50 to 100,000 florins in a year — an income five or six times as considerable as that of half the Prime Ministers in Germany.

LETTER VIII.

In the Grand Duchy of Hesse there are still existing several little colonies of French Protestants, descended from refugees who took shelter in the country at the revocation of the Edict of Nantz. Curiosity led me to visit Rohrbach, one of these villages at the edge of the Odenwald, a few leagues from Darmstadt. A walk over gentle hills and valleys, alternately covered with forest and cornfields, brought me to the neat little village, which had a character about it which I am unable to compare with that of a French village, but which was quite distinct from that of the German ones around it. The first person I addressed in the village spoke French—rather Germanized, but fluently—a delicate sound, which came with an ill grace from the mouth of a square-built heavy fellow, in appearance a true German peasant. "*Oui, nous sommes tous*

Francais ici," he replied to a question I put him, with a communicative alacrity which might or might not smack of his ancestry. The landlord of the little inn had something more marked in his appearance. His sparkling eyes, sharp features, and thin greyish hair, were decidedly not German. He spoke French with less of the vulgar German accent, and with something of the smartness of a Frenchman: but he had a German figure, broad-shouldered and slouching, and not a little of the stately taciturnity of a German host.

These villages have each a French pastor, and a French school for the children. I visited the pastor at Rohrbach, a paralytic old divine of 80; whom I found reclining on his bed in a dark dirty room, which served for parlour and bed-room, decorated with shelves of dusty books and half-filled phials. He received me with great good-humour, ordered out the best fare of his house —bad Rhenish wine, and good bread, and butter, and cheese — which he pressed upon me with hospitality. During our repast, the old gentleman recounted his his-

tory. He had resided there fifty years. His father had been a French pastor at Walddorff, another French village in the vicinity. He had a niece, who lived with him, and whom, with himself, he was obliged to support upon his *pauvre pension* of 200 florins, not 20*l.* a-year. This, with his house and garden, was the whole emolument of his cure.

Till within about twelve years he had been, like his brethren, in receipt of a pension from our government, which appeared, strangely enough, to have been paid by oversight for nearly a century longer than had been originally intended. When the colonies of refugees first established themselves in the country, they were allowed by the Landgrave of Hesse freedom from taxes, and other privileges, for fifteen years: at the end of that term, if they remained, their pastors and schools were to be put upon the footing of those of the country, and receive salaries from the government. To furnish them the means of instructing their children and of following their religious worship, pensions were allowed to the villages by the

Dutch and English Government. The former, however, have been long since taken off; but the latter, after having been paid for a century, were stopped only twelve or fourteen years ago, on the pretext that they were originally only designed as a relief during the first fifteen years, after which they ought strictly to have ceased. The poor old man thus found his income reduced to his scanty salary from the Grand Duke of Hesse, which he contrasted most feelingly with the fat emoluments of some few of his German brethren, who still retain the tithes, and who, during the enormous prices of corn in the last year had, in some instances, reaped at the rate of near 10,000 florins a year. The instant the old Pastor discovered my country, he earnestly bespoke the interest which he concluded I must of course have with the government, to bring about the renewal of his pension. He conducted me over his house — showed me his parchment covered collection of Latin and French Divinity, slumbering on the dusty shelves of a garret — the picture of his niece, of whom he was very fond — his garden of potatoes and cab-

bages, and his outbuildings, on which and his house he assured me, with pride, he had expended — from first to last, *above* 100 *Louis d'ors.*

The old man, like his parishioners, spoke much better German than French; but his sermons are always in the language of his ancestors, though German would be easier to himself and more intelligible to his congregation. The little colony intermarrying indiscriminately among themselves or with their German neighbours, have nearly lost all traces of different origin. The circumstance of their adhering, for above 130 years, to their own language in their worship and the education of their children is the more curious from their identity with the Germans in most other respects; and particularly so, considering that their neighbours are all Protestants, like themselves, and many of them, like themselves, of the Reformed or Calvinistic persuasion. As the German language is now become more familiar than the French, this last remaining distinction may fall into disuse. If policy had predominated with them over habit and national attachment

they would, ere this, have dropped it, in order completely to incorporate themselves with the Germans. Their origin would thus have been lost, and they would have acquired the character and full privileges of natives — at present they are still looked upon as colonies of foreigners, to whom the government shows much liberality in affording protection and furnishing a small pittance for the support of their schools and pastors.

LETTER X.

We passed along the beautiful *Berg-strasse* (the Roman *Strata Montana*) of which I have before given you some description, to Heidelberg, in a gusty bleak night. Though necessity, rather than taste, selected this hour for the journey, the fine scenes familiar to us in their full meridian features now delighted us with some of those indefinite and flitting charms which a beautiful face acquires behind a transparent veil. Heppenheim, Weinheim, and the other towns, with their impending mountains and ruined castles, were sometimes involved in thick gloom, and sometimes half illumined by the "chaste beams of the watery moon." Weinheim is an old walled town now decayed and insignificant, in one of the most striking spots of the *Berg-strasse*. A fine round-headed mountain, covered with vines and crowned by the old Castle of

Windek, rears itself abruptly above the town—the old-fashioned market-place of which slopes down a steep declivity, while the rapid Weschnitz below, emerges with a foaming impetuosity from the narrow valley through which it has wandered among the mountains of the Odenwald. A dismal *Chateau*, once of the Electors Palatine, and the crumbling walls and portals of the town are the only remaining traces of its consequence.

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The interior of the Castle presents nothing more remarkable than the ordinary splendour of sattin papers, polished oak floors, audience rooms, clocks, canopies, &c. &c. The old Margraves of Baden, and the Princes of Pforzheim and Zähring, whose titles have devolved on the Grand Duke, hang on the walls, and gave rise now and then to a genealogical explanation from our sagacious liveried guide. The dining saloon, a handsome room, opens into the interior of the octagon tower, called the *Bleythurm*, (Lead Tower,) in the centre of the Castle. The view from the outside is extensive and beautiful. At the back of the Castle it commands the

rich expanse of beech and oak forest, which, by way of repetition of the quaint ground plot of the town, is intersected by thirty-two straight alleys, all converging to a point at the Castle, some of them extending through several leagues of forest; the blue broken tops of the Vosges Mountains in France bound the prospect. On the other side, the town, with its mathematical formality of straight lines, presents a picture of exact analogy to the forest view at the back — except that the forest here is such a one as the rural Methodist parson said he preferred on transferring his tub from a village to a city — a forest of chimneys instead of trees. Round the back of the Castle stretch the spacious and umbrageous shrubberies and gardens, laid out in a corresponding style of straight alleys, circles, and squares; the walks ornamented by rows of orange trees, some of them of great size and value.

The new Lutheran Church just completed, on the scite of one which an increase of population rather than of piety had rendered too contracted, is a much boasted ornament of the Capital. It is the work of

Weinbrenner, an architect of Carlsruhe, of great reputation, who has travelled in Italy, studied at Dresden, and ornamented several of the principal towns in Germany. The large Corinthian portico is the most striking part of the edifice: but the columns are thick and gouty; and though too high for the pediment, which is awkwardly perched in the air, are without lightness or grace. The capitals, cornices, and other ornaments, appear elaborately finished: but without richness of effect, or freedom of execution. The steeple is a little square piece of *mesquinnerie*, such as you sometimes see on a trim looking chapel of ease near town. The interior is far from redeeming these defects, by its gigantic stained columns with gaudy gilt capitals, its square unrelieved length of walls, and the finical *recherchés* ornaments superinduced upon a grand outline.

The picturesque "English Garden" of the Margravine is one of the most agreeable of the many agreeable promenades round the town. A small but handsome pleasure house stands in the shrubberies, in which the old lady had planned a *fete*

they would, ere this, have dropped it, in order completely to incorporate themselves with the Germans. Their origin would thus have been lost, and they would have acquired the character and full privileges of natives — at present they are still looked upon as colonies of foreigners, to whom the government shows much liberality in affording protection and furnishing a small pittance for the support of their schools and pastors.

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Dutch and English Government. The former, however, have been long since taken off; but the latter, after having been paid for a century, were stopped only twelve or fourteen years ago, on the pretext that they were originally only designed as a relief during the first fifteen years, after which they ought strictly to have ceased. The poor old man thus found his income reduced to his scanty salary from the Grand Duke of Hesse, which he contrasted most feelingly with the fat emoluments of some few of his German brethren, who still retain the tithes, and who, during the enormous prices of corn in the last year had, in some instances, reaped at the rate of near 10,000 florins a year. The instant the old Pastor discovered my country, he earnestly bespoke the interest which he concluded I must of course have with the government, to bring about the renewal of his pension. He conducted me over his house — showed me his parchment covered collection of Latin and French Divinity, slumbering on the dusty shelves of a garret —the picture of his niece, of whom he was very fond —his garden of potatoes and cab-

bages, and his outbuildings, on which and his house he assured me, with pride, he had expended — from first to last, *above* 100 *Louis d'ors.*

The old man, like his parishioners, spoke much better German than French; but his sermons are always in the language of his ancestors, though German would be easier to himself and more intelligible to his congregation. The little colony intermarrying indiscriminately among themselves or with their German neighbours, have nearly lost all traces of different origin. The circumstance of their adhering, for above 130 years, to their own language in their worship and the education of their children is the more curious from their identity with the Germans in most other respects; and particularly so, considering that their neighbours are all Protestants, like themselves, and many of them, like themselves, of the Reformed or Calvinistic persuasion. As the German language is now become more familiar than the French, this last remaining distinction may fall into disuse. If policy had predominated with them over habit and national attachment

champêtre, which the weather obliged her to adjourn to the palace. In one corner of the garden is a small modern Gothic building, containing a simple monument to the Margrave her husband, who was killed before attaining the throne by a fall from a carriage during a visit to his daughter the Queen of Sweden. The upper story contains two little apartments, hung chiefly with English prints, which formed the favourite abode for many weeks of the late Duke of Brunswick, the hero of Waterloo. Grief for the loss of his charming wife, a daughter of the old Margrave, drove him to seek distraction and comfort with her family at Carlsruhe. He formed a solitary study of these little apartments, situated in a sequestered shrubbery, and passed several weeks here almost without society.

The Court library at Carlsruhe, which has been enriched by the addition of that at Rastadt, on the union of the Margraviate of Baden-Baden with Baden-Durlach, and since by the spoils of numerous cloisters and *mediatized* Princes, occupies one of the side buildings of the Castle, and contains

about 70,000 volumes. Among these are many curious books of the fifteenth century, some costly antiquarian works, and some good editions of the classics. Among the MSS., which are rather numerous, are two curious Hebrew Bibles, the property of the great Hebrew scholar and sturdy champion of literature in the fifteenth century, Reuchlin. The largest of these he received as a present from the Emperor Frederick III. Reuchlin was born at Pforzheim, in the Grand Duchy of Baden, educated at Baden, and class-fellow of one of the old Margraves. At his death he left his books and MSS. to an institution in his native town, from whence they were brought to the library at Carlsruhe—the little German Capital invariably absorbing all that is valuable in the provinces.

The picture gallery of Carlsruhe, of course, an invariable accessory of splendour to the Residence, contains, among many insignificant pieces, some of merit, by Van Eick, the first German oil painter, Rembrandt, Craier, Holbein, Quintin Matsis, Vandyke, and a variety of Dutch and Flemish painters; and a splendid portrait of the

minister Colbert, by Champaigne, which the Grand Duke bought of Napoleon for 6000 florins. His Royal Highness adds pretty liberally to his collection, though his treasury at this moment is by no means overflowing.

The ordinary plan of education of German boys, from the higher down to all but the lowest classes, is at the Public Gymnasium, a free school, to be found in every considerable town. They a good deal resemble the grammar-schools in our large towns, except that the ranks of the boys are even more mixed — and the system of education and discipline by no means comparable. The sons of many of the noblesse frequent these places of instruction; the more opulent, or judicious, have private tutors in their own houses. Latin and Greek, of course, form a principal part of their instruction — but it is a proof of the defectiveness of the system, that in spite of drilling at the Gymnasium, and a residence, at least of two years, at the University, you seldom find a man, in the higher ranks, who possesses more than the merest smattering of classical attainments. The Professors,

and some of the Pastors, are almost the only tolerable scholars. The higher classes of the Gymnasium are instructed, besides the dead languages, in philosophy, theology, &c. The boys are placed, on their entrance, in the class for which they appear fit, on a preliminary examination. The noblesse rarely send their sons to any but the higher classes, into which a little favour often admits young Barons, who are more fitted for the lowest. The boys generally learn gymnastic exercises, and are often taught to sing patriotic songs at their games.

You might suppose that petty despotic governments would little relish these spices of patriotism in instructions administered under their immediate patronage; — that they are not lost upon the young minds, you will perceive when I come to speak of the system of the university. Do not, however, set this licence down to any extraordinary liberality. Supine indifference, and an utter blindness to the operation of causes, not quite immediate, are the prevalent characteristics of the little governments. With some few exceptions,

most of the Princes would little hesitate to prescribe alterations in the system, if it ever entered their heads, or those of the multitudinous counsellors around them, that such seeming trifles as the games and songs of the public schools, might be pregnant with more important results to their thrones, than a marriage with a great power, or a visit to a little one. The more shrewd well-wishers to despotism see clearly that the rising generation are educating at the Gymnasium and the University with ideas of independence, ill-suited to the capitals of the little monarchies. But the Princes' easy apathy, in this and other instances, lets things take their course and unintentionally favours the progress of liberal ideas, which must in the end, either bend or break the governments with which, in their present state, they can never go hand in hand.

The self-adopted costume of the little urchins of the Gymnasium, is another badge of their patriotism. The long flowing hair, brown frock coats with short skirts, open necks and little caps, which give them the look of the little

quaint ragamuffins whom one sees in an old wood cut of the days of Albert Durer, are a close aping of the dress of the universities; where this costume is intended for a revival of the old German fashions, which it is thought must be necessarily instrumental in reviving the good old German spirit. But the worthy papas and mammas would surely do well to put a veto upon such ebullitions of public spirit; for they sadly disfigure their little patriotic darlings of eight or nine, and, after all, I fear, are much more likely to make Tom Truants of them than either Brutuses or Hampdens.

Besides the usual Gymnasium, Carlsruhe contains a variety of useful public Establishments; such as a Deaf and Dumb Institution, a public Drawing School, where boys and girls receive lessons *gratis* in drawing, geometry, &c., &c., a Military Cadet's School, an Engineer's School, and a Forest and Hunting School, for young men intended for the forest and hunting department. The instructions, however, of this last school are necessarily confined to the theoretical knowledge necessary; forest

botany, mineralogy, mathematics, &c.; and the young nobles who follow this wild profession generally acquire under some superintendant of forests who takes pupils, the whole science of cultivating and managing woods, and hunting wild boars and stags, after the several modes used and approved of.

LETTER XI.

DURING my stay at Carlsruhe, the Court of the Grand Duke was shut up on account of the approaching confinement of the Grand Duchess, to which the Sovereign and his people were looking forward with anxiety: but their hopes of an heir to the throne have been disappointed, by the arrival of a third little Princess. The respectable Dowager Margravine, the mother of the Grand Duke, holds her pleasant little Court in a handsome house in the town, yclept the Palace, and announced by a couple of sentinels at the door. Her Royal Highness is the sister of the Grand Duke of Hesse, the old Landgravine of Hesse-Homberg, and the Grand Duchess of Weimar. Without the intellect or acquirements of her last illustrious sister, she has much of her simple excellence of character. I was presented to the good old lady at

a *soirée* at the palace, which, with a slight addition of stars and uniforms, resembles those at private houses to which the soft charms of the belles, cards, lemonade, punch, and *jeux de societé*, give the chief *agrémens*. The Court was in mourning for a Prince of Anhalt, or some other illustrious cousin of the never finishing family. The Grand Master, a veteran administrator of the drawing room, erect in the pride of pedigree, performed his office with due pomp and gravity. The Margravine, who has given birth to some of the handsomest and most estimable Princesses of Europe, is now above seventy years of age — the ruin of a majestic woman. Her noble figure is little bowed by age, and her faded features have still traces of the beauty of her daughters. The Ex-Queen of Sweden strongly resembles her in features and manner, and will, with years, settle into a similar model of matronly dignity and plain simplicity of character.

The evening circles at the palace are pleasant, and tolerably unceremonious. During tea, the Margravine converses af-

fably round the circle with much friendliness; after which, she sits down to her *partie quarrée* with the most distinguished persons present; and the branches and scions of Sovereignty are so multitudinous in Germany, and the numerous courts present so many convenient "*houses of call*" for Princes, that the old lady's party of Boston rarely wants the eclat of a crowned head or two. In the absence of others a *mediatized* Prince is generally to be pressed into the service. The rest of the party follow their own views of amusement, as they either lead them to win or lose a few *kreutzers* at Boston, Whist, or Zwingen — to post their sworded figures against the saloon doors in unoccupied awkwardness, or to trust for amusement to a round table of conversation, judiciously provided, in case of need, with ladies' light works, puzzles, and other resources against flagging vivacity. A fair Russian *Dame d'Honneur* to the Princess Amelia of Baden, whose gaiety and *naiveté* shone by the contrast with the tranquil German belles, generally gave life to this placid coterie. Mademoiselle

——— is a singular instance of fascinating manners unconnected with beauty. Her unpretending vivacity and mildness gave her the privilege of doing and saying every thing. She was the life of every party; the arranger of every pleasure; and the object of more sentiments than half the professed beauties of the residence. Her education under the care of the Empress of Russia, in a convent of noble ladies, had given her a fund of accomplishments, and, amongst others, the very rare one of speaking English like an Englishwoman. Our language, she assured me, is much cultivated at St. Petersburgh, where she had had practice in speaking it. The Russians, and all the Sclavonians, are remarkable for their dexterity as linguists, which my fair acquaintance thought in part owing to the barbarous sounds with which their organs are drilled in their own tongues, which render all others comparatively easy. Dr. Spurzheim would probably trace it to organization, and perhaps the following instance of Russian polish he would also ascribe to some important bump.

On making our obeisances to the old

Princess, on her retiring with the ladies of the Court, an officer of rank always expressed his reverence by a retreating scrape with the foot, a squat of the head, and a violent elevation of the shoulders. I attributed it at first to awkwardness: but how was I mistaken! it was a fashionable bow *à la Russe*; a mode of which I afterwards saw several examples in Germany, and which a wicked friend suggested must be borrowed from certain respectable quadrupeds of the vast Empire, which in England we sometimes put under the tuition of a dancing master, but whom we never choose for our tutors in the graces.

The dinner parties at the Court of the Margravine have the hospitable splendour without the unpleasant ceremony of a German Court. An easy round table is generally filled with ten or a dozen guests, who arrive from the drawing room in the usual stately file, and five or six of whom are company invited, and the remainder persons of the Court. The party is thus small enough for a general conversation, carried on with about as much vivacity as conversation ordinarily assumes at a German

meal, and as is consistent with the consciousness — as little unpleasantly felt as possible, but an inevitable *gène* to a certain extent — of a Princess being of the party.

At the end of the ceremony of dinner, the butler of the Margravine would sometimes introduce for her amusement a favourite parroquet, who would perch upon Her Royal Highness's shoulder, and eat out of her hand, or pay his respects to the company in various quaint ways, till, after having gone through all his feats, the royal pet always made his exit in a rage, which brightened his eyes, and ruffled his plumes, to the amusement of the admiring Court. The parroquet was more than commonly amusing one day, out of consideration for His Serene Highness a little fat Prince of Waldeck, a Sovereign of fourteen, travelling between a couple of governors, and who laughed himself nearly into convulsions at the performances of the comic biped. There was something highly droll in this little Dutch built minor *faisant la cour*, in his quaint coat, silk small cloaths, and buckles, to the venerable old Princess, who joked and amused him with the most con-

descending good-humour; while the two tutors stood observing the promising scrapes and repartees of the precious sprig of Sovereignty entrusted to their charge.

The French is the general language of the Court and the higher circles at Carlsruhe, as at all the German Courts. In the South, proximity to France, and the close alliance of the Rhenish Confederation with their liberal Protector, have, however, made it more general than in the North, where, particularly in the great mercantile towns, many persons refuse to speak it, even with foreigners. The Prussians, in particular, set their faces against it; and the Prussian soldiers, whose haughty airs since the successes of the last campaign make them generally disliked, think the language a sufficient pretext for insulting its speaker. German is still, however, far from excluded at Court — it often slides into conversation by accident. The Prince or Princess address their friendly speeches and enquiries to their compatriots in their own tongue. It is still the language of intimacy and friendship; but French is the current coin of the circle, a part of the

Court costume, not less indispensable than the sword and buckles, and which, like them, is laid aside the moment the entertainment is over. The necessity for possessing this accomplishment as a qualification for "*la bonne societé*" is carried to such a ridiculous pitch, that in a town where there was no court, I have heard a German of the upper rank, speaking in praise of some persons below him, whose talents, he said, would really be an acquisition to the first circle, (who were *all Germans*,) lament the fatal objection — "*but then, you see, they don't speak French.*" Leave a circle of German noblesse to themselves, and they will naturally fall into the use of their own tongue, just as they speak it at home to their wives and daughters: but whisper to them that one of the party does not speak French, their dignity will take the alarm, and they will think it necessary to parade the high breeding of the acquired language. If this badge of the Court should become common among the *bourgeoisie*, it may *go out* among the nobles. But the patriotic spirit spreading rapidly among the middling classes shows

itself by a violent hostility to every thing foreign, and in particular to the French language, both as one of the insignia of aristocracy, and as a *memento* of their old oppressors.

The courtiers at Carlsruhe are not quite so rigid as their neighbours, in obtruding their nicety on the point of birth, seeing that the despised *bourgeoisie* have a very high representative among them. The Grand Duchess of Baden, you know, was a Demoiselle Tascher, the niece of the Empress Josephine, whom the Grand Duke, when Hereditary Prince, was obliged by Napoleon to espouse. The Grand Duchess owes her present secure seat on the throne of Baden, at one time somewhat in jeopardy, chiefly to her prudence and amiable conduct, which have endeared her to the Grand Duke and his family. Buonaparte, according to custom, little consulted the young Prince's inclinations; and the marriage with a stranger and a Frenchwoman without birth, was so disagreeable to him, that for a long time afterwards he resided at Carlsruhe, while the Grand Duchess lived at Manheim. The Grand Duke,

however, about four years ago, accompanying his father—a worthy man, who treated the French Princess with great kindness—to see her, was so struck with the graces of her person and manners that he has never quitted her since. He is now become strongly attached to her, and they live together on happy terms.

Her Royal Highness is a handsome, graceful woman, described to me as full of the talent and *aimabilité* of a Frenchwoman. Every one speaks in her praise, as engaging and amiable; the more refined belles I could see with sincerity: but the true-bred, slow, soft, German fair, as I have frequently observed, neither understand nor enjoy the brisk charms of a French rival. There is something about this sparkling, smiling, actively graceful person, which they hardly know how to make out, but which they cannot choose but admire. Her presence gives them an evident uneasiness, which, if not precisely that of conscious inferiority, is the sensation which slowness and gravity often experience in the presence of wit and alacrity. The French Ambassador's wife or daughter is

frequently the most interesting lady of the Court Coterie. — When she wins her way, with a graceful glide into the circle, every thing from the air of her turban to the point of her foot, announces a creature of another order, from the erect well-meaning figures around, all looking conscious of their feathers and sattins. The German women are often handsomer and finer women — but they want her air of refinement, her easy grace and self-possession. — Their dignity, in comparison, is burly, and their elegance prim and elaborate. The French lady has the air of consciousness of these advantages, which she announces, simply, by not obtruding them. She enjoys her quiet triumph in the circle of beaux she is sure to attract round her — and when she wishes to carry a point, or take the lead, it is done with a placid irresistible grace which has won success before her good sober friends have had time to consult dignity and decorum. This sort of footing is not that of cordiality; and a scrupulous exchange of titles, on both sides, a smiling sympathy on the part of the Frenchwoman, and a doubly collected dig-

nity on that of the German, seem to preclude any nearer *rapprochement*. "*The French ladies are so light*," said a languid German lady to me, innocently mistaking heaviness for stability, and imagining her own countrywomen the antipodes of the quality she objected to. . . .

One of the most interesting acquaintances I have made in Germany, is that of a French nobleman and his wife, of one of the most distinguished families in France; but whose graceful manners, urbanity, and domestic affections are far higher claims to esteem. The Countess F—, now the tender mother of six children, has a delicacy of figure and expression which gives a grace to all that she says or does. The freshness of feeling and the maternal fondness which remain unspoilt, after a youth of brilliance; and that innate vivacity, which, needing no stimulus from vanity, can display itself in a circle of friends round an evening table, as charmingly as in the circle of a Court are the rarer qualities which distinguish her. The Count has all the gaiety and the polished ease of his countrymen, with a frank sincerity and

sterling worth, which it is often the fashion in England not to allow to Frenchmen. But English people are much too apt to criticise character *en Anglais*, rather than *en cosmopolite* — and because gaiety and grace are, with us, artificial elements not to be attained but at some expence of nature and sincerity, we are too apt to imagine that all that is not serious must be insincere, all that is not grave must be hollow and light. My friends, the Count and Countess ———, are not the only foreigners I know who delightfully reconcile in their characters the solid with the showy, all that is prepossessing and charming in the drawing-room, with all that is virtuous and affectionate in private life. An instance of their domestic propriety of feeling is worth mentioning.

Private theatricals, at the Palace, form the frequent diversion of a German Court in the long snowy winters. In filling up the lists of the *dramatis personæ*, for the approaching winter, the grace and taste of Madame de F—, were calculated on, as in themselves a host. But when the courtiers were anticipating the diversion

with pleasure, I was surprised to hear her decline it with some trivial excuse — and on being repeatedly pressed, she at last owned that she had consulted her husband, who did not think the constant rehearsals and dress-makings, and studying plays and attitudes, the most appropriate occupations for the mother of a family. — The whole Court, of course, flew upon the husband with reproaches and entreaties; but the supple Frenchman and diplomatist, in whose gaiety you might, at first sight, have seen nothing but levity and polished subservience, was firm as a rock, in defending his homely notions, against the attacks of royalty and rank; and his wife, not less lively, gave up, without a regret, the amusement in which she was sure of shining, in compliance with his sensible objections.

Among the Court visitors at Carlsruhe, was the Hereditary Duke of Mecklenburg Schwerin, a jovial good-tempered man, but a perfectly polished courtier. With his rosy complacent face, and lively but dignified manners, he had something of the air of a hearty English naval officer. His Royal Highness's wife, now dead, was a

sister of the Emperor of Russia—a dignified alliance which once stood him in some stead, in a gay crowd at Paris, where a little German Prince is in some danger of being overlooked, like a king of Lilliput among the Brobdignags. A French diplomatist was about to present his Royal Highness to a Turkish Prince, at that time the splendid novelty of the Thuilleries and the gay circles—and wishing to procure him a distinguished reception, he puzzled himself a few minutes to hit upon the means of offering him to notice with some more imposing character than that of a simple German Prince. At last he bethought him of his Russian spouse's consequence, and instantly led his Royal Highness to the turbaned Grandee, as the "*petit fils de l' Imperatrice Catherine.*" The Turk had too good reason to remember well the "*Imperatrice Catherine,*" not to overwhelm her illustrious grandson-in-law with Oriental civilities. The Duke of Mecklenburg has long been attached to the Princess of Hesse Homberg, the only sister of the husband of our Princess Elizabeth—but there is "one fair daughter and no more,"

and the old sovereign of Homberg loving her more than "passing well," long declared the impossibility of parting with her. He has now, I understand, at last, been induced to consent, with tears in his eyes, to the separation; but he cannot bring himself to remain at Homberg during the marriage, and will return to it only to welcome his married son and his illustrious English daughter-in-law. The old Landgrave is somewhat *bizarre* in his character, and when he at last assented to his daughter's marriage, it was on condition that it should take place the 1st of April.

Another distinguished guest, was his Royal Highness the Hereditary Prince of Weimar, who, like the Duke of Mecklenburg, espoused a sister of His Majesty of Russia. The Prince has some traces of resemblance to his illustrious mother; without any of her personal dignity or her talents—With his tall lolling figure and solemn face, now and then relaxing into a stiff simper, he scrapes round the circle, dropping complacent things with a grave solemnity, and carrying his enormous hat and plume as if about to make an offering of them to the

ladies. His manner had that sort of overpowering unhappiness which you sometimes see in the subordinate gentry of the stage, who deliver three words of message or of graceful politeness from the same declamatory tribune which they mount in a funeral oration.

The separate court of the Margravine Frederic, the widow of the Margrave Frederic, an uncle of the Grand Duke, occasionally offers the attractions of dinners and evening circles. The residence of a German Prince generally presents one or two of these subsidiary courts,—sort of satellites to that of the Sovereign—and the neglect of a presentation to which is a breach of all courtier-like *etiquette*. Her Highness is a pleasant sensible woman, with whom and her Grand Master, we had the honour of forming a quartetto, for half an hour, on our presentation; occupied by lucubrations on the weather, our journey, the suspension of the habeas corpus, and the unlucky *rencontre* of the dog and my Lord Castlereagh's hand, &c.; after which we were pleasantly relieved from reminding her Highness that we had had enough of her company, by her signifying as much to us, in a graceful retiring bow and a hope of seeing us again.

LETTER XII.

The new regime of Germany has ranked the Grand Duke of Baden, the seventh member of the Serene Confederation, coming immediately after the King of Wirtemberg, and before the solitary Elector of Hesse Cassel; now as much an Elector, in reality, as an inhabitant of Birmingham or Manchester. In the latter days of the Empire, the Elector ranked above the then humble Dukes of Wirtemberg; but the sovereigns of Wirtemberg and Baden have availed themselves, more adroitly, of the tide of politics, and by enlisting, zealously, under the banners of Napoleon, have stolen a march upon his Electoral Highness in power and precedence. The Allies, some will say, should not have permitted a staunch old legitimate to be pushed from his stool by a

Grand Duke and a King of yesterday, whose dignities are rather equivocally acquired from a rather equivocal source — But the statesmen of Vienna thought otherwise — and you can easily conceive that compact military sovereignties were in a condition to negociate more efficaciously than an emigrant Prince just returned from exile. The near relationship of Baden with Russia, and Wintemberg with Great Britain, may also have given some weight to the notes of their diplomatists; while the old Elector's close alliance with Prussia (by his own marriage, that of his son, and other intermarriages for the last century) gave him little more than the support of a reed broken by the same storm which had, for a time, swept himself from the map of Germany.

The population of the Grand Duchy of Baden — henceforward a considerable power — is about 1,200,000, nearly three times the amount before the profitable Confederation of the Rhine. The revenue before that event was nearly 300,000*l.* per annum; it is now, I believe, increased in about the same proportion as the territory. Besides his connection as nephew by marriage to

Napoleon, the Grand Duke was—whether willingly or not, far be it from me to decide—a useful member of the Rhenish Confederation. His state was drained, and his people squeezed dry, to support his contingent of troops, at one time amounting to no less than 20,000 men. In his zeal, or in his hard task-work, (whichever it is to be be called,) the Grand Duke brought into the field as many troops as his much more competent neighbour of Wirtemberg. His Royal Highness was little with them himself. Campaigning little suits his weak indolent character; but they were well equipped by his people's gold, and ably commanded by the young Counts of Hochberg, under whom they gained considerable distinction.

His peace establishment amounts to about 8000 men; four times as many as his subjects are disposed to consider necessary for garrisoning the town, mounting and relieving guard, and parading in full dress before the Palace. In this number there are about thirty-three Generals; a General to about every 230 men; a proportion, or rather disproportion, which

reminds one of our infantine tastes, when in our tin or paste-board armies we always created as many officers as privates, because they were the prettiest and most showy. Unfortunately, however, for the finances of Baden, General Officers are more costly play-things than soldiers, and the people complain loudly that not above six or seven of these doughty commanders are in service, while the remainder receive pay as favourites of the Court, and their number is continually augmented to make snug retiring shelves for the dignitaries whom Court manœuvres lay aside to make room for other aspirers. The Baden troops are some of the handsomest and best appointed I have seen in Germany: but a deficiency in these qualifications is rarely to be charged on the legions of the small Sovereigns. As they are the pets and hobby-horses of His Highness, and the main ornaments of his capital, they are generally more showily equipped than those of more gigantic Sovereigns, to whom the great bulk of their army are more for use than ornament. The Grand Duke of Hesse's army are appointed *à la Française*.

In Baden, the alliance with the great northern Autocrat holds up the ugly Russian and Prussian fashions to imitation, and the long tapering waists, and chests swelling with horsehair or wool, give to the soldiers the awkwardly effeminate look of a Russian or Prussian trooper. The Prussians carry this system of stuffing their men into fine figures to the highest caricature; and many civil *elegans* of Germany, whose shapes at the distance of a hundred leagues are often under the discipline of a Berlin tailor, owe the manly swell they carry before them to convenient pads inserted in the lapelles of their coats.

It is difficult to give you an idea of the government and political condition of Baden. The exhausting efforts of the country at the conclusion of the late war, and the weak unstable character of the Grand Duke, have left every thing, according to the vulgar phrase, at sixes and sevens. The desperate condition of the finances has arrived at the unusual extremity of frequently retarding the salaries of the servants of government. The taxes are high, and the people generally discontented, a

main cause of their unfortunate emigrations last year. The Grand Duke is governed entirely by his favourites, and his wayward inclinations. While his illustrious mother and sisters are patterns of good conduct and sense, His Royal Highness's character, originally amiable, has been spoilt by being an only son, and an *enfan gâté*. He was educated entirely at Carlsruhe, and has scarcely seen any thing beyond it. The excellent Margravine, prudence itself in every thing else, could not refuse the young Prince Charles any thing that he wished. His grandfather, the late Grand Duke, (his father was killed early in Sweden,) one of the most respected Princes of Germany, deserved in every thing, but his indulgence of his wild heir, his title of "Charles Frederic the Wise." His Royal Highness's character is now naturally enough formed into one of vacillating indolence, inaptitude to business, and suspicious distrust of all around him. He passes much time in gaming, drinking, and dissipated pleasures, and will sometimes ease himself of the accumulated *ennui* of neglected papers, by consigning a

bundle unexamined to the flames. The passion which he has lately taken for the amiable Grand Duchess, is some restraint upon his wandering course, and may lead him to pursuits of better taste at least, if not of more advantage to his country. In a small despotic state, the character of the Prince is the secret spring that moves the whole machine; and in Baden every thing appears to partake of the Sovereign's instability. Changes and new organisations are continually making and meditating; new Committees, Colleges, and Ministeriums appointed without any apparent improvement of the real condition of things. As to all that relates to political liberty, the establishment of the States, the freedom of the press, &c., &c., the people here, as in the other States, are "referred to the coming on of time," and the decisions of the Diet, which may come with it. The Diet being specially charged with this important matter, the Sovereigns reasonably enough suspend all their proceedings till the general precedent of a constitution appears, which the Serene Assembly are to draw out as a model for all the States.

The Congress of Diplomatists naturally undertake, rather reluctantly, a task which is to curtail the prerogatives of their illustrious Masters — but it is the general opinion of the best informed persons, that sooner or later, Representative Constitutions must be conceded to the universal demands for them. The spirit of enquiry, and a sense of their rights, have been too much raised by late events among the Germans, to be silenced by any thing but compliance with their rational requisitions. The most staunch supporters of the arbitrary Governments see plainly that concessions are no longer to be evaded.

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LETTER XIII.

From Carlsruhe we made a pleasant excursion to Baden, the Capital of the old Margraviate of Baden-Baden — now as fashionable a place of water-drinking, bathing, and gaming resort in this part of Germany, as Toeplitz, Pyrmont, or Carlsbad, more to the north and east. The last season was unusually brilliant, and boasted among its guests half the crowned heads and grandees of Germany. We hired for the journey a *Lohn Kutsch*, an old crazy caleche, tumbling along behind a couple of animals of the true hackney-coach breed, at the true German rate—about a league in an hour; for these mensurative terms of distance and time so exactly correspond in German, that they are synonimes in the language; and a league and an hour are both expressed by the phlegmatic *stunde*.

Our route to Rastadt crossed the fertile

plain of the Rhine, between rows of young fruit trees for five leagues of undeviating, but cheerful formality. Rastadt is a neat town on the river Murg, not without traces of its former consequence, as the residence of the last Margraves of Baden-Baden. The Castle, a sort of miniature imitation of that of Versailles, is a formal edifice, with a Belvedere surmounted by a gilt Jupiter, whose flaring limbs were burnished by his friend Phœbus into conspicuous lustre. The God holds, however, a decayed sceptre, and looks down on desolate colonnades and grassy quadrangles which now distinguish the palace of the great hero, the Margrave Louis of Baden, whose exploits against the Turks, live in the traditions of the people and the trophies of the palace. The physiognomy and figure of the warrior, recorded in large portraits in the gallery of the castle, are remarkably striking, though by no means characteristic of his profession; but rather expressive of intellectual superiority and refinement, looking doubly sapient under the flowing wig of the day, and which distinguish him

not a little from his moustachio'd and harnessed grandfathers and great uncles around, who all appear better fitted than himself for ransacking the haram, and capturing the Bashaw's tails. A large glass case of swords, turbans, embroidered saddle-cloths, chemises, and other appendages of eastern state, are shown as testimonies of his prowess; and a picture of a soft eastern beauty — the Briseis who graced his spoils. Besides a variety of family pictures, in which the hero and his wife Sybilla (as the housekeeper, according to the stately German idiom, entitled her) are often times repeated, the Castle displays a collection of stags' branches, and pictures of forest monsters, killed at a recorded time and place by this and that Margrave, and the famous Congress saloon.

The memorable negociations on the politics of Europe, of which it has been the scene, give an interest to this homely whitewashed chamber. Here the Prince Eugene and Villars concluded the Peace of Utrecht, and, in later days, the famous Congress of Rastadt, to which the eyes of Europe were directed from 1797 to 1799,

held here their sittings. You remember the horrid tragedy of the murder of the French deputies, which terminated this diplomatic combat. A monument now records the spot, just out of the gates of the town, where Bonnier and Roberjot were massacred by Austrian Hussars, as they departed from the Congress with the usual passports. The latter was butchered in the arms of his wife, who endeavoured to prevent their dragging him from the carriage. Jean Debry, the third Minister, whom the assassins left apparently dead, crawled back to the town, where he met the wives, children, and servants of his murdered companions, who had escaped. The inhuman barbarity and treachery of this transaction, from which the Austrian commander only exculpated himself by a reference to his superiors, are exceeded by few political crimes which have sullied the age.

After dining at the table d'hôte, crowded with Swiss merchants returning from the Frankfort fair, we crossed the rapid Murg, and leaving the high Basle road, entered a rich pasture valley, in the green recesses of which Baden is situated. The villages by

the road side were neat and bustling, and the hills higher and bolder as we penetrated up the valley, now and then covered with vines, but more frequently with rich forest foliage, beginning to reflect the diversified tints of autumn.

Baden is romantic without being wild. A chain of the fir-clad Black Forest Mountains rise on one side of the smiling valley; while another irregular ridge screens the back of the town, its rocky wooded top crowned by the ruins of the old Castle of Baden. The town stands stragglingly on an abrupt slope, with the stream of the valley at the bottom; the more modern Castle overlooking it from a commanding terrace. The streets are narrow, and not remarkable for cleanliness. The summer residences of the Grand Duchess of Baden, and some others, occupied by different Princes during the season, are neat and pleasantly situated: but its natural beauties, and the virtues of its waters, are the only recommendations of the place. This was peculiarly the case on our visit, when the season was at an end; the saloons shut up, the actors gone, the *rouge et noir* tables dusty and deserted,

and about a dozen heavy Germans, the only remnants of the motley assemblage of all nations who had enlivened it in July and August.

We lodged at one of the principal bathing hotels, containing about twenty-four baths, and thirty or forty rooms, fitted up with tolerable comfort; but almost all empty. There were seven or eight more houses of similar capacity in the town, and one-third of the private houses let lodgings in the season. Baden contains not less than thirteen sources of hot water; the heat of the principal one is about fifty-four degrees. Their names are curious enough; such as the Jew's Spring, the Moor's Spring, the Hellish Spring, which rises in a part of the town called the Hell, and the Scalding Spring, christened from the useful purpose it serves of scalding pigs, poultry, &c. A fat kitchen maid was saving herself the trouble of picking a lapful of pigeons by dipping them in the spring, which, with a slight rubbing, stripped them with an agreeable expedition. The waters are increasing every year in celebrity, and are said to work surprising cures of gout, rheumatism, indigestion, and surgical disorders.

The air of the place is fresh and pure, and the neighbouring scenery abounds with beauties, which good roads render accessible.

In spite of the unfashionable season, a pretty numerous party assembled at the table d'hôte, headed, as usual, by the substantial landlord and his pretty wife, who fed daintily, and looked and talked softly to the admiring *convives*. Her spouse was a complete German host, dignified, bulky, and stupid. On discovering my country, he recounted a long list of Englishmen who had lately visited Baden: but who might as well have been Hindoos, for any indication of their country conveyed by the names the good host assigned them. They were all, however, either Lords or *vornehme leute* (people of distinction); but as to most of them he remarked, with some surprise, "*Sie machten nicht viele aufwande, nicht viele pomp*," they did not spend a great deal, or make much show; a circumstance which seemed not to accord with his notions of a *Milord Anglais*. A German host presides at the table d'hôte, carves the dishes, and dispenses his politenesses to the guests with a sort of taciturn

dignity which are sometimes highly amusing. The subaltern officers, and other regular frequenters of the table, court his conversation, and are pleased to be well with this important personage—generally a well-fed portly man, who, especially if he happen to be a State *employé*, as Mr. Postmaster of the Station, is well wrapped up in fat official self-complacency. His eldest son has, perhaps, held a commission in the army—Mrs. Postmistress has been, or is yet a beauty—or he has a fine family of little ones, who, in such case, frequently adorn the walls of the saloon, and whom I have seen appear in their best dresses after dinner, as if their company must be as interesting to the guests as that of the children of a friend. If the sons and daughters dine at table they generally occupy, with their visitors, the best places round papa and mamma—rarely offering civility to any one, rather declining intercourse, talking easily among themselves, and showing, by their whole deportment, that they consider themselves to the full the equals of papa's guests. One of the sons frequently holds the office of *Herr Ober Keller*, (Mr.

Upper Waiter,)—the Germans never cheating this useful personage of his title—who, after waiting upon his sisters and their beaux, in common with the company, during dinner, I have seen resign his official napkin, and take a hand at whist with the family friends, which he would not lay down though the bells rang, and "*Herr Keller*" resounded from all corners of the inn. I have not often met with any thing like real civility in a German inn, for the matter of course bows, and old-fashioned wishes of "a good appetite," "a prosperous journey," "sound sleep," &c., &c., are mere German formalities. The host's indifferent *hauteur* rarely gives way to any thing but a stupid servility towards consequence which he is capable of appreciating. Our Baden host, the most silent and sententious of his breed, became all bows and awkward graciousness to a little man with the cross of Malta, who came in late to supper, and who proved to be a Baron, holding some office under government. "*Would the Gnadiger Herr (Gracious Gentleman) like this dish*," or "*should he fetch something hot for His Grace?*" and other similar attentions,

were poured forth with an alacrity quite surprising. This servility to rank proceeded from the same littleness of mind which made the good Boniface dignifiedly incommunicative to all without badges or titles; and its contrast with the promise of independence held out by his broad rubicund face and solid figure, gave it an air of the ludicrous, which reminded of Falstaff's solidity of person, coupled with his milky heart.

Baden presents in the season all the usual resources of a German watering-place; a theatre, balls, promenades, hazard, and *rouge et noir* tables. Gaming, with the exception, perhaps, of the great Capitals, appears exclusively confined to the bathing-places, where it forms the principal resource of all ranks; and the sums lost in a season by Princes and other individuals would sound considerable in countries where fortunes are more colossal than in Germany. With such distinguished patrons, it is easy to conceive that the Government of Baden is more ready to tax than to prohibit the gaming establishments. They pay a considerable duty for the benefit of the poor, and almost as much to the land-

lord of every Bathing-house, where they set up their bank; in spite of which, three or four banks find it a good trade, and return every year. A distinguished Russian General whom I knew at Carlsruhe, had been stripped at the tables of Baden of a small portion of the spoils which his Cossacs had procured him in the war. His propensity was too inveterate to be cured by experience. His debts had been once paid, and his fortune augmented by the Emperor of Austria, in reward for the dispatch with which he had brought the news of the birth of the young Napoleon from Paris to Vienna—a journey which the gallant General performed on horseback in five days and nights. Sensible persons complain loudly of the effects of these absorbing gaming-tables on the society of Baden. Ladies, as usual on the continent, partake their enjoyments, to which every other pursuit is sacrificed. The agitation of the game counteracts the benefit of the waters; and unfortunate players are often obliged to shorten their stay, and depart with their disorders uncured, and their bills unpaid.

A principal table is in the old Jesuit's

Convent — now converted into a *Maison de Conversation* — the choir of the church unhallowedly serving for a *Salle à Manger*. The building stands prettily on the edge of a sort of cliff, planted with shrubs, up which you ascend by some winding rocky steps to the saloon. A cave in the rocks below, which served the Jesuit *bons vivans* for their cellar now answers the same purpose to the *restaurateur* of the establishment. Here and at the Promenade House the balls and assemblies are held. Sunday is the day when they are gayer and more crowded than ordinary; and, of all others, the hours from four to eight, immediately following dinner, are frequently selected in the heat of summer for the vigorous exertion of waltzing.

The inhabitants of Baden are principally Catholic; the Margraviate of Baden-Baden, having been a Catholic Principality, now devolved on the family of Baden-Durlach, who have long been Protestants.

The *ci devant* collegiate, but (to use a violent Germanism) in-eighteen-hundred-secularized Catholic church is an awkward building, of that sort of impure Gothic, with a

minaret steeple, so universal in this part of Germany. It is now the parochial church, the foundation being united to the Gymnasium or Lyceum, the professors of which have stepped into the ancient stalls, and officiate at the mass. Their salaries, though, like other ecclesiastical emoluments by no means enormous, are somewhat raised since the foundation of the college in the fifteenth century; when the worthy Provost had one hundred florins, (between nine and ten pounds,) a-year, the Dean half the sum, and so in proportion. The modern priests of Baden would probably consider the old statutes of the founder as unreasonable, and obsolete as his salaries; one of them enacting that none of the choir shall laugh or make faces in service time; that no Prebend go in ironed wooden shoes into the choir; and "that if any shall behave himself unpriestlike, be it in ladies, gaming, or other gross cause, the Chapter shall not pay him his salary, be it money, fruit, or wine, until he give up *concubinatum publicum*, gaming, or other matter for which he was suspended." The church, which was

like the castle, and most of the considerable buildings in the country, damaged in the devastation by the French in 1689, presents nothing remarkable but the monuments of the Catholic Margraves of Baden. A benefactress of the Church is recorded by an inscription modestly beginning "Here lies N. I." but afterwards explaining that she had bestowed 5000 florins, under an express injunction of concealment of her name. Surely there is some coquetry in the modesty of Madame N. I., whose bounty becomes known to every visitor of the church from the peculiarity of this record; whereas the simple statement of her name would have effectually answered the object of attracting no notice.

The Lyceum, or Foundation School, was formerly an institution of the Jesuits, who, on the dissolution of their order, contrived, by intrigues, and exciting the popular spirit in their favour to retain possession of it for some time in spite of the government. At first a single secular teacher of philosophy was introduced, but found their cabals too hot to remain. The celebrated,

Martin Wierhl was then placed in his stead, whom they involved in disputes on his philosophical tenets, which were referred to six Universities. Wierhl was, however, protected by the Margrave Charles Frederic, and the Jesuits were at last driven out.

There is at Baden a neat small convent, with its little church, of nuns of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, who originally came from Liege, and who have avoided secularization, in latter days, by undertaking a school for poor girls of the place. They have also a few boarders, of higher rank, who pay little more than eleven or twelve louis a-year for board and education. The convent has its own baths, and the nuns are strict in not showing themselves.

The poor appear to be well taken care of at Baden. Besides a considerable Hospital, or Poor-house, and a smaller one called, the Good-people House (less from the qualifications of its occupants than the dispositions of its founders) there is a large bath for them — where, besides the benefit of the waters, they receive weekly allowances, good Rumford soups and other comforts.—

The establishment is, in part, supported by the heavy tax on gaming, and by a weekly contribution for the poor, collected by a police officer, from the company at the bathing hotels.

The Castle of Baden, built about 1579, by the Margrave Philip II. is a rambling desolate building, with a dreary quadrangle little worthy of notice. The King and Queen of Bavaria, and the Queen of Sweden, and other connections of the Baden family, occasionally occupy it during their visit in the season.

The only curiosities are the subterranean passages and dungeons of the Castle, which have excited much speculation as to their origin and use. A narrow stair-case conducts to them from a tower of the castle. They consist of a number of small vaulted chambers and passages, communicating with each other, and evidently of great antiquity. Two of the principal ones have still immense stone doors, nine or ten inches thick, and about six feet high, opening inwards, and which, with difficulty, move on their hinges; in others you see the hooks on which iron doors once hung.

One of the vaults has a secret communication in the roof, with the main entrance to the Castle; and another, which goes by the name of the Torture Chamber, presents a row of iron rings in the wall, which tradition says, were used for some purpose of torture. A deep dungeon, now nearly filled up, which adjoins it, is said to be the place into which condemned criminals were precipitated. The dungeon remained empty till about thirty years ago, when, according to *on dit*, a dog accidentally fell into it; and in descending to fetch him out, the remains of two wheels, armed with sharp knives, were discovered at a depth of many yards. The last and principal vault, which is supposed to have been the chamber of a court, has double rows of holes in the wall and low stone supports for benches, with the remainder of a screen of wall, said to have formed part of a baldachin.

It is clear, from the dimensions and construction of these vaults, that they could not be designed for a mere refuge in case of siege or danger. Light and air are excluded from them, and they are too small to hold any considerable number of persons. The

traditions of the country (not to mention the firm belief of the good old housekeeper who showed them to me) ascribe them to a seat of one of those terrific institutions, the *Vehm Gerichts*, or Secret Westphalian Tribunals, common in Germany till the reign of Charles V. The proceedings of these tremendous courts are so curious and interesting, that you will pardon my sending you some particulars of them.

The Holy *Vehm*, or Bloody League, was a mysterious tribunal, which existed, originally, in Westphalia, and from thence spread itself throughout Germany. It was also called *Frei Gericht*, (Free Tribunal,) and the place of its sittings, *Frei Stuhl*, (Free Chair,)—and it is not uncommon in Germany, to meet with a district (like that I have mentioned near Hanau) which still bears the name of *Frei Gericht*, derived from this source. The greatest secrecy pervaded their proceedings; all that was known of them was arbitrary, bloody, and terrific. The members of a tribunal consisted of a supreme Judge, or *Stuhlgraf*, and, at least, fourteen Assistants, or free Assessors, (*Frei schöpper*,) composed of all

ranks, Princes, Nobility, and Citizens — every one being eager to shield himself from the terrors of the tribunal by becoming a member. In the fifteenth century, when the tribunal was in its most daring power, there were about 100,000 free judges in Germany. The judges, who ordinarily went by the name of the *wissenden*, (the *knowing* or *initiated*,) recognized each other by a sign, discoverable by none but the fraternity. The court was thus the powerful instrument of ambition, private malice, and oppression. No one knew his accuser or his judge — both might be his neighbour or seeming friend. On their initiation, the members bound themselves by the most solemn oaths to bring all before the tribunals that deserved punishment, respecting neither friends nor relations; or, in the words of their terrible oath, to "uphold and conceal the Holy Vehm, before wife and child, before father and mother, before sister and brother, before fire and wind, all that the sun shineth on and the rain wetteth, before all that floats between heaven and earth."

The proceedings, as may be supposed,

were very summary. — The officers of the tribunal stole in the night to a Castle or a town, and affixed, on the gates, a judicial summons to this Prince or that citizen to appear at the Frei Stuhl, at a given time and place, to be examined on a given matter. If the summons was repeated three times, without effect, the accused was condemned, *par contumace*, once more summoned — and if that proved fruitless, outlawed and hanged by the road-side whenever caught. If he resisted he was bored through the body, bound to the tree, and left with the executioner's knife sticking by him, to show that he was not murdered, but a convict of the Frei Gericht. The tribunal used to assemble at midnight, in the church-yard of the place where they intended to hold a sitting. At break of day, the ringing of the bells announced to the inhabitants the presence of these formidable visitors. All were obliged to assemble in an open field, sitting down in a circle, in the middle of which sat the President and Judges of the Tribunal—the *insignia* of a sword and rope before them. When any one of bad reputation appeared

in the circle, one of the Judges would step up to him, and touching him with his white staff, say to him — "*Friend, there is as good bread to be eaten elsewhere as here.*" If the conscience of the person was so clear that he did not choose to take the hint and go away, he might sit still and run the chance of accusation; but it was generally more prudent to decamp. When the Judge touched any one, three times, with the formidable white wand, it was a signal that he was a hapless convict already secretly accused and convicted; and no time was lost in hanging him at the next tree or beam which presented itself. This was the invariable punishment of criminals of all ranks; although now it is out of use in Germany, and the meanest criminals have the honour of decapitation. The youngest Judge generally performed the office, which was managed with so much secrecy that the hangman was rarely known. The crimes taken cognizance of by the *Vehm Gericht*, were chiefly heresy, infidelity, sacrilege, high treason, murder, incendiarism, rapes, robbery, and contumacy to the Tribunal, its Judges and Messengers.

The flagrant cruelties and injustice to which the Tribunals were perverted, at last, excited frequent leagues among princes and cities to restrain their power; and on the improvements of criminal jurisprudence, by the Emperor Maximilian, in constituting the Imperial Chamber, and Charles V. in introducing a new criminal code, the court gradually fell into disuse; and by the end of the sixteenth century it was no more heard of. There seems some probability in ascribing the vaults of the castle to one of these bloody seats of judgment; particularly as it is well known that a *Vehm Gericht* once existed somewhere in the Margraviate of Baden-Baden. In 1459, the Margrave Karl I. granted his protection to the town of Esslingen, solely on condition that none of the citizens should either become judges or suitors in a Secret Westphalian Tribunal. The Margrave's Privy Council then contained, however, many of these secret judges; and five years afterwards he concluded a league with the Elector Frederic of the Palatinate and other Princes for the express suppression of the Tribunal. The

subterranean vaults are evidently much older than the castle built over them, and their appropriation to such a tribunal seems one of the most probable conjectures as to their use.

LETTER XIV.

We returned from Baden to Carlsruhe, by way of Gernsbach and the delightful valley of the Murg, which a Swiss called, for its romantic beauty, "the preface to Switzerland." The drive is picturesque in the highest degree. We wound up a narrow sloping valley by which the little river Os rattles its way through patches of pasture and dark woods, from the mountains where it rises. Sometimes the road leaves the stream at a distance below, and winds through the thick skirt of the Black Forest, which covers the slopes of the mountains. Through the openings, the cones of the Staufenberg and Mercuriusberg appeared on the other side the valley, covered with feathering black firs; and in looking back, we caught occasional glances of Baden with its belfries and towers, through the winding defiles of the valley. The firs of the Black

Forest have a rich, tufted, funereal appearance, which gives a gloomy grandeur to the irregular mountains they cover. Their slate-coloured stems feather down to the ground; and the glimmering of the sun through the thickets gives a slaty, dingy, hue to the wood, which almost increases its gloom. The scene reminded one of the poet's picture: —

> " Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
> A death-like silence, and a dread repose.
> Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
> Shades ev'ry flower, and darkens ev'ry green,
> Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
> And breathes a browner horror on the woods."

On emerging from a fine beech wood, which closed this forest scene, we found ourselves, after a constant ascent, on the top of a range of irregular mountains, with the valley of the Murg beneath us. The prospect, from the brow of the mountain, was rich and diversified. The opposite mountains raised their woody heads in irregular wildness — and on the left, the opening of the Murg valley let in the smooth cultivated plain of the Rhine, presenting a total contrast to the wilder scenes

around us. Gernsbach, once the duodecimo capital of the Counts of Eberstein, lay beneath us on the Murg, at the foot of the mountain, covered with vineyards. Our *kutscher*, who had vented his discontent at the fatiguing hills in some "*hundert tausend heilige sacrament & donner wetters*," (hundred thousand holy sacraments and thunder weathers) to his horses, now lighted his pipe a-fresh, resumed his seat, and set his horses off with a something between a grunt and a holloa, to rattle down the descent to Gernsbach.

The little town stands romantically on the Murg, over which there is a bridge; and the rafts of fir trees, &c. floated down the river from the Black Forest, sawn up in the carpenters' yards on the banks, give it a bustling lively air. It is the residence of an upper Forest Master and a Bailiff, has a school and a Protestant as well as a Catholic Church. Just out of the town, the bold mountain of Eberstein projects its dark pine-covered head over the Murg, crowned by Eberstein Castle, a feudal ruin, now smartened into a little Gothic summer residence of the Margravine

Frederic of Baden. The Margravine had recommended me to explore her abode when I visited Baden; and the beauty of the spot induced me to follow her Highness's advice. At the foot of the mountain, close to the river, stands a quaint little chapel, in which the lamp was, as usual, burning, and where Mass is said every Sunday. You here leave the high road, and commence the zig-zag ascent through the wood of pines to the castle. After following this circuitous course, rendered necessary by the steepness of the mountain, we entered the massy outer gate, on which the arms of the Counts of Eberstein —a boar (*Eber*) in a golden field and a rose—still figured. The Castle—whose rude walls and turrets still retain their antique air in spite of the emendations and ornations of Mr. Weinbrenner, the polished architect of Carlsruhe—is immediately surrounded by a garden, on the narrow apex of the mountain, laid out with taste and simplicity. The view from the terrace is strikingly romantic. The Murg runs perpendicularly below, brawling over its shallow bed. Gernsbach with

its saw-mills, its dams, and busy yards, stands lower on the stream. Looking up the valley, which gradually narrows, the eye traces the stream passing one or two smoking villages, till it is lost in the defiles between the dark mountains, whose irregular shapes indicate the windings of the valley. The southern slopes of the mountain are planted with rich vineyards—a path through which leads down to the nearest village in the valley. It is difficult to give an idea of the picturesque wildness, mixed with the smiling air of comfort of this spot. The grand features of nature are here exhibited in miniature, and their romantic luxuriance has nothing too wild or overpowering to be agreeable in an every-day view.

On quitting Gernsbach, after a comfortable dinner at the best little Inn and a bottle of fresh Margraviate wine, we crossed the Murg and proceeded along the high-road through several of the picturesque little villages on the right bank. Each of these has its dam thrown obliquely across the river, to turn the village mills; and the active industry of the inhabitants is di-

in the circle, one of the Judges would step up to him, and touching him with his white staff, say to him — "*Friend, there is as good bread to be eaten elsewhere as here.*" If the conscience of the person was so clear that he did not choose to take the hint and go away, he might sit still and run the chance of accusation; but it was generally more prudent to decamp. When the Judge touched any one, three times, with the formidable white wand, it was a signal that he was a hapless convict already secretly accused and convicted; and no time was lost in hanging him at the next tree or beam which presented itself. This was the invariable punishment of criminals of all ranks; although now it is out of use in Germany, and the meanest criminals have the honour of decapitation. The youngest Judge generally performed the office, which was managed with so much secrecy that the hangman was rarely known. The crimes taken cognizance of by the *Vehm Gericht*, were chiefly heresy, infidelity, sacrilege, high treason, murder, incendiarism, rapes, robbery, and contumacy to the Tribunal, its Judges and Messengers.

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air and a voluptuousness to the motion, which, perhaps, contributes some little danger as well as much additional grace to the dance. Its present rapidity, while it diminishes the latter, reduces its perils, if any remain, to the less romantic shape of vertigoes and contusions, which it requires skill in a small saloon to avoid.

Without wishing to see my own countrywomen become waltzers, I would no more deprive the German ladies of this pleasure, than forbid country dancing in English drawing rooms. The former is as innocent in Germany as the latter in England. The impropriety or harmlessness of the amusement depends on habit and national character. Englishwomen cannot waltz without doing violence to some invaluable notions of delicacy and reserve with which they have been brought up. The amusement is, therefore, improper, because it cannot, at first, be indulged in without a certain consciousness that it is so. But the case is different with the German ladies. A German girl of fifteen, whose cheeks are almost suffused with blushes at the sound of her own voice, lays her arm on her partner's shoulder,

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Prince's sister. When the King stripped him for his political conduct of his offices and emoluments at Court, the Prince of Hohenlohe was left almost destitute, and his brother-in-law immediately settled on him a considerable portion of his own income.

At this ball, as well as in the other circles of the place, I met the family of the Countess, now Princess of Hochberg. The young Counts are distinguished officers in the service of the Grand Duke. The Princess Amelia her only daughter is one of the most pleasing women I know in Germany. She has all the simplicity and softness of her fair compatriots, with a grace which they sometimes want. The old Countess of Hochberg is the widow of the late Grand Duke of Baden, espoused, after royal fashion, with the left hand. Since my departure from Carlsruhe, the Grand Duke, being without male issue, has recognised by a public act the legitimacy of the young Counts, and their claims to the throne in the event of his dying without a lineal heir. On this occasion the family were raised to the dignity of Princes.

This step had long been talked of, and the propriety of it long enforced on the Grand Duke; but his irresolution continually postponed it, and at last, in the true spirit of a weak character, selected for the purpose the very moment when his wife's situation held out immediate chances of an heir. He took the same opportunity of decreeing, in all events, the indivisibility of his dominions; that part of them called the Brisgau, formerly the possession of Austria, having been settled to return to that power in case of the Grand Duke's being succeeded by any but a lineal descendant. How far this *sic volo sic jubeo* of His Royal Highness will avail in opposition to previous solemn arrangements, time will show.

LETTER XV.

We have often remarked that what forms the superiority of our English frame of society, is that happy amalgamation of its parts, that nice shading off of ranks one into another, which leaves the freest elbow room to ambition and talents, and preserves the indispensable gradations of rank, without subjecting any classes to absurd and galling exclusions. No country has so dignified an aristocracy, and yet none so much real equality, so free a mixture of ranks. Those who thought to extinguish ranks, and make society as level as Salisbury Plain, by inveterately calling each other Citizen, ended, with the sure affinity of extremes, in erecting a rank higher than their country ever knew before, and surrounding it with ultra-aristocrats. The Swiss profess to have no titles; but the

Swiss Seigneur takes care never to be described in an instrument without the word Noble before his name, and thinks it one of the saddest effects of the late misfortunes of his country that his sons are obliged to soil their hands with commerce. The fact is, whether recognised or not by titular distinctions, a virtual aristocracy is as necessary a concomitant of society as an inequality of talents or of stature; and let the analogy be kept up, and the respect paid to it be just what ordinary men involuntarily pay to superiority in brain or in shoulders, and rank has its due, and has no reason to complain. But the mistake made in Germany was to permit to nobility not merely a monopoly of bows, and titles, and royal society, but almost of the fresh air and the bread and cheese of life. Nothing that was valuable was attainable by any other passport than a prescribed number of quarters of nobility.

But these days of pure blood and privileged casts are now fast on the wane. The flimsy fabric of society has received a good dislocating shake from the late commotions

and concussions. "*Externus timor, maximum concordiæ vinculum*" made common cause between all classes; and the Sovereigns and their gingerbread courtiers in the hour of need were happy enough to owe their deliverance from the iron rod to the sturdy strength of the plebeians, who were alone able to break it. The intercourse of the grave race with the Revolution and its sons was also well calculated to rout them out of some of their obsolete systems. If it was startling to a decorous German to see his Sovereign and haughty Court proceeding to the frontier to welcome, with cringing submission, the approaching Protector of the Rhenish Confederation, or retiring — Princesses, Maids of Honour, and all — to the Golden Sheep, or the Red Bull, in a provincial town, to avoid encountering in the Residence a domineering French General, who had perhaps been a shoe-black; it was hardly less so to see a high-born delegate, incrusted in ribbands and crosses, and armed with credentials half occupied by the enumeration of his titles, set out on a trembling mission to head quarters, to negociate with an Aide-de-

camp or Secretary, who would perhaps have been puzzled to swear to the name of both his parents. The secularising of the chapters, and confiscation of the rich canonries, for admittance to which it was difficult to prove nobility enough, and very few of which now exist, were more substantial blows to the system; for as title in Germany propagates nothing but title *ad infinitum*, these were most convenient resources to large families of young Barons and Baronesses, who are now often obliged to remain dignifiedly idle and dignifiedly unmated.

Owing to these causes, in these degenerate days, the precious *ærugo* of antiquity on the Baron's escutcheon is so much declining in repute, that with the exception of eligibility to great household offices at some Courts, and the Grand Crosses of some strict orders, a title of the first edition is nearly as good as one which has gone through a dozen; and even the total want of the particle *Von* (the talismanic symbol of nobility) before the name, is now an exclusion from nothing of more vital importance than the Court dinners and the

tea-and-turn-out of the noblesse. A Court physician of my acquaintance has even dared to write a treatise on nobility, admitting the use of the order upon the whole, but hazarding, in contradistinction to the German creed, that new nobility is decidedly preferable to old. It is hardly necessary to add that the worthy doctor is himself of the new-baked batch.

The offices of the government, the first political charges, every thing but the gay saloons, are now principally filled by the *bourgeoisie*. They are good drudging men of routine, who make able Privy Counsellors, and War Counsellors, and Forest Counsellors, &c. while the activity and intellect of their noble rivals rarely qualifies them for any thing beyond a commission in the *Chevaux Legers*, or Hussars, or the very arduous offices about the Court Drawing Room, which far surpass in estimation any of a political character. You might live at a German Court for a month without ever hearing of such a person as the Prime Minister. I sat at the Court dinner one day next to an awkward looking man, who seemed little to belong to the company around him, in spite

of a star and a cordon, whether or not of the celebrated order of the "*Blue Herring*," I cannot say. On enquiring who he was, I was flippantly answered, "Oh! it's the Prince's minister." But it is impossible to spend a day in the Residence without hearing the name of His Excellency the Grand Chamberlain, or Grand Marshal, who orders the Court dinner, and announces it when ready, or His Excellency the Grand Equerry, who paces a score of the Grand Duke's nags every morning, rung in one's ears with all his titles and qualifications. These "*hautes charges*," as they are called, not demanding any unreasonable portion of talent or activity, are still monopolised, without detriment to the public, by the possessors of pure blood.

The clashings of consequence between the *bourgeoisie* and the noblesse, which arise from this occupation by the former of all important objects of ambition, coupled with their scrupulous exclusion from the insipid elegance of noble society, occasion the most ridiculous inconsistencies, and give to society the character of a phial of oil and any heavier fluid, which, after infinite shaking, still pertinaciously refuse to amal-

gamate, but the separate bodies of each roll about mutually repelling, sometimes one uppermost, sometimes the other. The Cabinet of one Court is composed of a Council of Ministers who are at the head of all the departments of government, communicate immediately with the Sovereign, and are the main springs of the machine. The seats at this board, requiring more noddle than often falls to the lot of the pure blood gentry, are all naturally occupied by the *bourgeoisie*: but for want of the indispensable Von, these Cabinet Ministers, the most important men in the State, are never permitted to set foot in the Court Saloons, and rarely in those of the noblesse, which are crowded by young sprigs of nobility, who act under them in the subordinate offices of government. An acquaintance of mine who now represents a German Sovereign at a great Foreign Court, has, from the same want of qualification, never had the honour of visiting that of his own country. The Forest Masters of the districts, as I before mentioned, are offices exclusively set apart for the wearers of the coronet; but the finan-

cial and official business of the department is conducted by a Forest College in the Residence town, to which the Forest Masters are in all respects subject, and which it often happens is fully possessed by the active Bourgeoisie. The consequence is a perpetual clashing between the College and the noble Forest Masters; the former, happy in the opportunity of paying off old piques, and the latter glad to dispute the authority of men superior to them in office and in all talents—except those of felling a tree or flaying a boar—but who are by no means worthy to play penny Boston and sip lemonade with the rouged Baronesses in the evening.

The Bourgeoisie are, in short, every day growing such consequential and important personages that I have known the *Herr Ober Director* of a Court library, a *cidevant Valet de Chambre*, refuse the loan of a book to a Princess of the family; and his Royal Highness, the son of a Sovereign, take a snug cup of tea *en famille*, with a Bourgeois in financial administration, palaver his fat wife, and condescendingly flirt with Mademoiselle, his

daughter, from a desire to stand well with the administrator of the Treasury. These instances will give you an idea of the undermining of the importance of nobility which the increased activity of the middle ranks is every day pushing farther, and which noble stupidity and frivolity are not likely to check. The nobility are continually startled with some fresh explosion of their rivals' consequence — new appointments, new favours, acquired by untitled wights, nobody knows how. These strides they always set down to their rivals' unscrupulous use of dirty underhand roads to preferment — but though this is sometimes the case, their own inertness and imbecility often leaves the door open, and the Bourgeoisie profit by opportunity with nothing more than honourable ambition and activity.

Of course, the noblesse are the more chary of their supremacy in the drawing-room, in consequence of their declining importance every where else. Their political insignificance makes them doubly absolute as *arbitri elegantiarum*. But the modish winks and nods which note the little deficiencies in

Court *ton*, in the untitled ladies and gentlemen at the Casino balls, and the criticisms of the dress, manners, and bad French of the Baronesses of yesterday, on their *entrée* at Court, are only laughs on the wrong side of the mouth (to use the vulgar phrase)—the superiority they assert being so exclusively trivial and superficial. I happened to have for a neighbour one day at a Court entertainment, the recently ennobled spouse of a Minister of State, making her *debut* at Court, at the interesting age of sixty, appropriately qualified by her patent, her sattins and her blotches of rouge.* My fair neighbour appearing somewhat embarrassed by her new blushing honours, and the observation of the Argus-eyed belles around her, I was happy to relieve her by conversation, which cost me some trouble, as her Bourgeoise education had not extended her acquirements beyond her native language. My commiserating politeness to

* This last ornament is so necessary a passport to the Court Circles, that the want of it drew down a reprimand on a fair friend of mine, the natural *rouge* of whose handsome cheeks did not satisfy the fastidious taste of his late Majesty of Wirtemberg.

this *debutante* lady of the Minister afforded, afterwards, an ample theme of merriment to my friends of less impeachable purity of blood.

The only recognised opportunities of contact between the two classes, are the alternate public Balls and Evening societies, which take place every week, at the Casino: the citizens owing their favoured participation in these amusements to the convenience of their subscription for the support of the handsome establishment. Sometimes, on grand occasions, the Court condescend to attend. They occupy one end of the noble Saloon, sometimes raised by a step above the rest of the room, surrounded by courtiers and noblesse, who, in all the concentrated splendour of dresses and decorations contrive to keep up an atmosphere around them not derogatory to Sovereignty.

The worthy beaux and belles of the City, in their humbler array of finery, keep the distance of respectful spectators, eyeing and admiring the movements of Royalty and the glitter and graces of the Court, which they have only a precious periodical

opportunity of observing. In the dance, of course, the Court and Nobility take the lead, and the gradation of fashion and grace, in the string of whirling couples, is sometimes very curious — commencing with a Prince and Princess, whose easy evolutions bespeak refined tuition, and closed by a dapper Bourgeois, in his best clothes, who twirls his perspiring partner with an ardour little tamed by the graces. Though the Court belles are the models of *ton* and grace in the room, the fresh charms of their humble rivals sometimes subject them to unpleasant mortifications. Their volatile beaux will sometimes profit by the occasion for variety, and dance the whole evening with the happy Bourgeoises, while the Maids of Honour and Baronesses not having an opportunity of consoling themselves by similar overtures to the young citizens, are sometimes obliged to remain quiet spectators of their rivals' triumphs. When not there on official duty, the Court ladies and many of the noblesse consequently often neglect these promiscuous meetings; and would absent themselves oftener, if a ball — the opportunity for a waltz — were not almost

equally irresistible to all ranks. The assemblies, or evening circles, a good deal like those at private houses, are more thinly attended. Tea, cards, conversation, refreshments, and *jeux de societé* are, as usual, the bill of fare of amusement. The billiard-rooms draw off many of the beaux. The young people of all ranks join in grown up children's games, and sometimes, *impromptu* dances, with a good-humoured ease. The Dowagers, both of the Court and the City, hang together a little more scrupulously, keep to their separate card-tables, are nice about speaking first, and exchange, when brought into contact, various little announcements and defiances of superiority — the City Dames being generally quite as starched and slow in making advances as their titled rivals. This is naturally the growing character of the *bourgeois*, who show, pretty abundantly, all the airs of successful *parvenus*. Their acquisitions of importance, at the expence of the privileged class, make the ridiculous exclusions — trifling as they are — to which they are still subject, doubly galling; for that species of philosophy which would be content to

smile in the consciousness of real importance at these frivolous inferiorities, is a feeling far above the flight of the worthy Bourgeois gentry. The noblesse, very unjustly taunt them with this soreness at their ineligibility to the pleasures of the *beau monde*, and affect to wonder that having gained the lucrative bureaux, they should still covet the *entrée* of the drawing-rooms. — But the feeling is quite natural. Absurd sweeping disqualifications — however really unimportant the object — are always galling to any body of men; and to be proscribed *en masse* from what is, in fact, the only society in a small town, is neither very reasonable nor very agreeable. Among themselves, the worthy Bourgeois lead that sort of muddling drudging life, which affords little opportunity for society; their social pleasures extend, therefore, little beyond the *reunions* at the Casino—the eagerly anticipated scene of the rivalries and conquests of the gaudy damsels. At some Courts the barrier against the non-nobles is a little relaxed, and high diplomatic office is sometimes a passport without the recommendatory *Von;*

but this is rare — and to the ladies, the monosyllable is the only introduction. On enquiring after two pretty and graceful women, whom I knew at Carlsruhe, and whom I missed in the gay circles, the conclusive answer was, "*Elles ne sont pas de la societé — Elles sont de la Bourgeoisie.*" All this child's play will, in time, fall into disuse — as much of what once existed has already done; but the good Germans, you know, do nothing rashly — and shut up in their forests and ceremonies, they appear slower in catching the improvements in the spirit of the age than their more mercurial neighbours.

LETTER XVI.

TAKING leave of our hospitable friends, we departed the morning after the Baron's ball for Stutgard. The road presented few interesting objects. We passed Durlach, the capital of the old Margraviate of Baden-Durlach; the Castle half in ruins from the French devastation of the country in 1689. On stopping at an inn in a village, the busy assemblage of peasants announced the *Kirch weihe*, or commemoration of the consecration of the church — celebrated in the Protestant German villages, like an English wake, by dancing and rejoicings, frequently kept up for two or three days and nights without ceasing. An immense Maypole, an invariable object in a German village, on these occasions is crowned with evergreens and ribbands, round which the peasants dance. The chief scenes of festivity, however, are some of the cottages, and little

inns, or beer-houses, where beer and wine assert their joviality.

After several leagues of dreary sequestered road through a corn country, intermixed with woods, we came to Pforzheim, situated in a deep but not picturesque valley. The town, once considerable, as the capital of the Princes of Pforzheim, ancestors of the Duke of Baden, is dismal and deserted, — slightly enlivened by a trade in watches and jewellery. We dined at a shabby inn, where, as is often the case, the cleanliness and neatness with which dinner was served were contrasted with the smoky walls of the saloon, and darkness and dirt of the house. A clean napkin and silver forks were not forgotten. The former is an invariable, and the latter a common luxury in very humble inns. I have sometimes seen silver forks in company with pewter plates. In the inns, and even in the houses of the upper classes, they are rarely cleaned, because, as a lady of rank explained it to a friend of mine, rubbing makes them thinner and lighter! the ostentatious solidity of plate being considered well purchased at the expense of

cleanliness. At a German dinner, even at Court, where gold and silver generally abound, one knife and fork invariably serves for the sweets, sours, and savouries of the twenty or thirty dishes of which most persons partake.

A good-looking young German sat by me very intent on a novel of Augustus La Fontaine, the Kotzebue of German novelists, both in popularity and prolificness. His works occupy three or four of the most thumbed pages in the catalogue of every circulating library, and, with abundance of German sentiment, have often a pleasing and natural vein of feeling.

After driving through a dreary country, now and then varied by a hill, covered with thin withered-looking vineyards, we entered the kingdom of Wirtemberg, announced by a handsome little pillar at the frontier. On stopping at the next *Chaussee Geld* (turnpike) house, we were surprised by a demand from a cocked-hatted collector for the sum of four *florins*, (near eight shillings,) instead of a few *kreutzers* as usual; but we found that the payment of it was to exempt us from all similar demands on the roads in the kingdom, there being no turnpikes but

at the frontier. The roads in Wirtemberg are some of the best in Germany — sometimes little inferior to our own turnpike roads.

The entrance from one little State to another, though not marked by the striking differences in habits and manners which you would observe on going out of Germany into a foreign country, is always, however, announced by some little variations which strike the eye of the traveller, and which sometimes give indications of the relative consequence of the two principalities. The uniform of the postillions changes at the first Post, and the *schwager* of the larger state is smarter and better mounted than his brethren in the smaller. In Baden they wear buff coats turned up with red, and the whole equipage is as much superior to those of Hesse, as the red coats, long yellow mantles, and clever horses of the Wirtemberg boys are to those of Baden. The postillion has a large bugle horn slung over his shoulder, which he often winds on entering a town with great skill and harmony. When you have four horses they ride one of the hinder ones, and drive the leaders with a whip

whose crack is terrific, having no idea of driving four from the seat. The coachman of the young Duke of Anhalt-Cöthen used occasionally to attempt this, in a style that made me tremble for His Highness's neck, and clearly manifested that Germany had not yet attained to the valuable institution of a Whip Club. Handsome mile-stones now for the first time regularly marked the *stundes* on the road. The royal arms at the post-houses had something of the splendour of English signs; and the names of every parish and *bailliage* were printed in respectable German characters on handsome posts by the road side. It was clear we were now in the kingdom of Wirtemberg, the sixth power in the Serene German Confederation.

Entzweihingen is the only place of any consequence between Pforzheim and Stutgard. It is an old walled town on the River Entz, along the bank of which the road runs for a short distance before entering it. The Castle standing on an abrupt little mountain, planted with vineyards, just above the town and river, was once the residence of two brother flowers of chivalry, concerning

whom traditions are still extant in the neighbourhood. While the postillion stopped, according to custom, to give his horses some sour brown bread, a diet which is said to have the happy effect of making them *hitzig*, (fiery,) we took coffee in the inn. The landlord, a formal sort of prig, attacked us with the inquisitiveness which you so often encounter in a German inn, where the country, the route, and the views of a traveller are frequently the only objects that rouse the phlegm of the host. As I spoke bad German tolerably fluently, the first question sometimes paid me the compliment of taking me for a Westphalian, where I conclude they speak nearly equally ill. Our host, however, with more discernment, began, "*Mit erlaubniss. sie sind kein geborne Deutscher?*" (*With permission, you are no born German?*) "*Perhaps a Dutchman? — a Frenchman?*" — my answering to which in a short monosyllable gave him a moment's pause; after which, he ventured a diffident negative, ushered in by a profusion of "forgivenesses" and "pardons," "*Meinherr is no Swiss.*" My gratification of his curiosity as to my country

naturally drew it forth as to a hundred other matters. "*I beg pardon; you are in mourning. Perhaps for a parent?—not so?—or a relation? With pardon, do you lodge at Stutgard at the King of Wirtemberg? or, perhaps, the Roman Emperor? A right good house, sumptuous table:—host a right reasonable man:—my good friend;—With forgiveness, if you mention the Herr Müller, at the Black Eagle, Weihingen, you will be well received.*" With this sort of officious loquacity, accompanied by an abundance of formal bows, mine host attended us to the calêche door, which he shut, pouring forth a volley of "farewells," "prosperous journeys," and "speedy arrivals."

We arrived in the middle of the night at Stutgard, and found the much recommended host and household of the Roman Emperor asleep; but a bed-room, with less than the modicum of comfort generally to be found in that apartment in a German inn, ready for late arrivers.

The *locale* of Stutgard is as dull and uninteresting as can well be imagined. I saw no town in Germany where the streets,

the buildings, the objects, without being mean — and some of them, indeed, are handsome — had so much of that uniform mediocrity of character, which produces *ennui* by dint of never interesting. One long wide street, dignified since the modern honours of the house of Wirtemberg by the title of *Königs-Strasse*, (*King*-Street,) traverses the town, from the gate leading to Tubingen to the Ludwigsburg, — now the *King's*-Gate — a modern massy portal — near which the Königs-Strasse is handsomely and regularly built. One side is occupied by some of the best houses in Stutgard, among which are the residences of our Ambassador, and several of the *corps diplomatique;* and the other by the splendid range of royal stables — a building which an ignorant person might often in Germany take for the Palace. The town stands in a narrow hollow, hemmed in on all sides by mountains of no great height, and which would be infinitely more picturesque if the sameness of their unvaried vineyards was relieved by trees, and other sorts of vegetation. For want of this the mountains are dreary, and the vineyards

far from cheerful. This situation of the place exposes it to frequent rain and fogs, and renders the picturesque scenery of the neighbourhood by no means easily accessible.

In these little Residence-Towns—if the metropolis of the kingdom of Wirtemberg, with its 20,000 souls, will not be offended at the title—all that is handsome or striking is modern. The modern buildings generally bespeak the increased and growing splendour of the Prince and his state; and you may accurately trace in the date and appearance of the architecture and embellishments, their gradation from the old humble regime of Margraves, Landgraves, and Counts of the Empire, first to that of Electors, and then to the splendid independence of Grand Dukes and Kings. The Princes are evidently making the most of the leisure—it cannot yet be said the wealth—procured by peace, to bring up arrears, and to put things on a corresponding level with the eminence they have gained by such rapid strides. New churches, new stables, new *corps de garde*, new streets, are building in their capitals, which give to them a pushing,

upstart, *parvenu* character, which, however inferior to the mellowed respectability of years, is the only one of any interest they have to present. Antiquity is here far too much connected with insignificance to offer any attractions. To trace a majestic stream to its source among the rude and grand features of nature, is an interesting occupation; but no one cares to follow a rivulet back to a puddle. The decay of grandeur has a melancholy but deep interest; but all that is old, in these duodecimo capitals, bears the stamp of a system more petty than that which exists. Mean streets, insignificant public buildings, without traditional interest, all remind one how much less a personage the Count was a few centuries ago than the king of to-day. This absence of all historical interest, is one of the circumstances, though not the most sensibly felt by every person, which contributes to the torpid want of interest of a small German capital as a place of residence. America has been said to be a country without associations; and the little German States are nearly in the same predicament—for they have none worth recurring to.

The palace at Stutgard is, upon the whole, not unworthy of royalty — that is, of the royalty of Wirtemberg—for in England, if the building would bear a comparison with some second-rate noblemen's seats, it is certainly some degrees behind the massive splendour of Blenheim or Arundel. It stands just out of the Königs-Strasse, screened behind a little grove of large trees which block up the view of the building. It is a modern, stone edifice, completed by the late King, the front occupying three sides of a square — the parapets decorated with handsome statues, and the centre of the roof surmounted by an enormous gilt crown and cushion, which would make an admirable sign for a flashy hotel by the road-side. "*On est toujours fier de ce qu'on ne possede que depuis peu*," said a shrewd German lady to me, in pointing to it; and her remark was justified by several of the splendid audience-rooms, whose walls are studded with this pompous decoration surmounting the arms of the family.

The interior of the palace is unquestionably splendid. — Ostentation and costliness are visible in every chair, sofa, mirror, table,

or time-piece. This ornament is all gold—that solid silver—this cost so many thousand florins—His late Majesty gave so many more for that. There is scarcely any thing more humble than rosewood, satin, porcelain, and porphyry. This crowd of luxury, often united with good taste, which generally adorns rooms of very moderate size, is chiefly owing to the magnificence of his late Majesty, whose indisputable connoisseurship in matters of royal pomp was rather unfortunate for his subjects. Several of the rooms of the palace are adorned with splendid tapestries, from the Gobelins at Paris, presents from Napoleon to his royal and humble ally, the late king—and among the rooms, pointed out as remarkable, are those once or twice occupied by the fallen Emperor, the Empress Maria Louisa, his Majesty of Russia, the Duke of Cambridge, and other distinguished characters, besides that in which the king died in October, 1816.

With the exception of some cabinet pictures of the Flemish school, one or two statues by Canova and other artists, the monuments of the fine arts are all of native

growth — for in encouraging the artists of his little kingdom, the late king showed some true notions of royal splendour, which, if they had not been confined to mere decoration and embellishment, would have led him to extend his protection to commerce as the best basis of magnificence, instead of oppressing it from childish prejudices against all that was not showy and glittering. He sometimes came to the sensible resolution, not to have a merchant worth 100 florins a-year in his dominions.

Stutgard has been, for some years, a considerable centre of the fine arts.—Danekker, to whom it is scarcely a compliment to call him the Canova of Germany, is a native and resident of the place. The palace is adorned by various exquisite little pieces, chiefly from his chisel — and his rooms, which I visited, contain many more. He had just finished a noble colossal head of Schiller — a bust of the late king, who had a striking physiognomy, with no slight resemblance to our revered sovereign — and a small statue of Love, one of the softest and most delicate morsels of sculpture I ever saw. The works of Danekker are

generally distinguished from Canova's by a less prominent infusion of the ideal — a more close embodying of simple forms of nature. This is managed with such excellent taste and so nice a sense of grace and beauty, that it only renders them more touching—more what every one can feel and delight in—without giving them the least approach to homeliness or want of grace. He had no work at Stutgard equal to his Ariadne, at Frankfort; but genius of the same character was distinguishable in most of them—the same harmonious grace of composition and delicate execution, the same soft round contours and tenderness of expression, the same admirable blending of the poetry of the art with touching truth of representation. The palace is also ornamented with a variety of pieces by the Messrs. Court Painters, Hetsch and Seele, some of them of unquestionable merit — elaborately designed and highly finished — but frequently cold in colouring, and mannered, and academical in character. They are painters of considerable reputation in

Germany, and were most liberally encouraged by the late king.

The gardens, at the back of the palace, are extensive, and laid out partly in the English and partly in the formal French taste. Close to the little terrace on which the palace stands is a large circular opening, cut into parterres and gravel walks, with a large piece of water in the middle stocked with curious aquatic birds — remnants of the zoological mania of the late king. The palace looks across this area up a long vista of road running through the English garden to the Court farms, and the village of Canstadt. The shrubberies, which extend for some distance on each side of this road, are intersected by pleasant serpentine walks which do not disgrace the title of the garden. The court farm and buildings, and a large saloon for public balls and amusements stand at the end of the garden; and the road proceeds through cheerful avenues of dwarf rose trees to Canstadt. There is a double carriage-road and a foot-path on each side; and the police, ever active in small matters, in the small states, carefully prevent any one from

making an exit by the entering road, or *vice versâ.* Walking in the high-road is also as much contrary to law as driving on the foot-path; and I incurred a reprimand for this misdemeanour from an old Swiss *gen d'arme,* who parades the gardens in official dignity, with a huge cocked hat, worthy of an old Croix de St. Louis.

Among the police regulations, posted in the Inns, which are very strict as to foreigners, passports, &c. &c. is one which forbids smoking in the street, under penalty of several florins and—"*confiscation of the pipe.*" This harsh edict was published by his late Majesty, who appears to have been so *un-German,* as to resemble our James I. in an antipathy to what the latter used to call the "*Stygian fumes.*" And the sensation the event created in the Capital, at the time, may be imagined from its being recorded in a chronology of the town, where I found it among the visits of foreign Princes and other remarkable events. Another royal edict of his late Majesty prohibited walking in the street at night without a lanthorn—an anxiety for the limbs of his subjects in which more

gigantic sovereigns have been cruelly deficient.

The wide walk, towards Canstadt, in the English Garden, is the favourite promenade of the *beau monde* of Stutgard, and almost the only agreeable one within reach, without climbing the hills. Adjoining the gardens are the Royal Retreat, a neat little country-house, the Royal Bath, and the buildings of the Royal Menagerie — now a tenantless range of stalls, cages, basins, and habitations carefully adapted to the character and dimensions of its late motley inhabitants. The royal favourites were, as may be supposed, lodged with somewhat more luxury than their plebeian relatives in the Strand. They were also far more numerous and curious. The collection was one of the most precious in Europe. The monkey tribe, who excited the especial curiosity of the king, mustered to the number of thirty or forty — scarcely any branch of the amusing family being unrepresented among them. There were generally two or three elephants, Spanish and African sheep, a Nil-Ghau and Conagga, besides the more ordinary animals, small and great, in

cage-fulls. The king used to visit his favourite subjects every day, and feed them with his royal hand. The costs of these playthings were almost incalculable, and their daily devourings of fresh meat, hay, vegetables, &c. &c. were described to me as exceeding imagination. The present king lost no time in dismissing this unfitting troop of consumers, to earn their living, as they ought to do, at the expence of curiosity — and the step must have afforded him some consolation, when his ears were assailed, in the beginning of last year, by the groans of his subjects perishing for want. The distresses occasioned by the failure of the crops were generally severe in this part of Germany; but in Wirtemberg they were felt with extraordinary cruelty.—Every necessary of life was at treble the ordinary price, and persons of affluence could sometimes scarcely, procure them for money. Turkey-corn, which is grown in quantities, for the use of poultry and animals, became the common, but scanty food of the poor; and in the Black Forest many died from famine or diseases brought on by a diet

made of the bark of trees, roots, and other nauseous vegetables. The king was compelled to declare, every Commune responsible for the death occasioned by starvation of any of its inhabitants. The crops of the present year have been abundant and successful; and the first load of corn which entered Stutgard was decorated with flowers, and attended with ceremonials and rejoicings, now represented in prints in the shop windows.

The palace of Stutgard has all the other usual appendages to the residence of a German Sovereign. The Theatre, with the ordinary performances on Sunday, and twice in the week, is a handsome building, terminating one of the wings of the palace, with which the royal box communicates. The King and Queen walk in and amuse themselves unattended, and without any of the state and parade used at the Court of Hesse, and common in the smaller Courts. Their presence is consequently less of a *gene* on the company, and people laugh and admire a little more at ease.

There are two royal libraries at Stutgard, one containing above 150,000 volumes, ill-

arranged, in a large dirty building in the market-place. The greatest curiosity here is the collection of Bibles in all languages, the most complete existing. They are about 3000 in number, besides 6 or 7000 volumes of commentaries and scriptural works. The Bibles came in part from collections at Copenhagen and Nuremberg. The King's private collection, or as it is called, the *Leib Bibliothek*, (the Body Library,) is in one of the wings of the Palace, and possesses nearly half the number of volumes, arranged with care, and continually increased by the addition of all celebrated modern works. I found many English volumes, particularly our large splendid publications connected with the fine arts.

Just by is the *Leib Stall*, or Body Stables, a distinct establishment from the *Marstall*, or Court Stables. The latter contain the horses in the general use of the Royal family, and officers of the Court, of which I counted about 200. The Body Stables are merely for the horses used by the Sovereign's own august person and those of his equerries—these were about 100. Horses are the

ruling passion, and almost the only luxurious expense of the present King. His Majesty sometimes mounts a dozen in a day, and the ceremonies of lunging, dressing, and rough-riding are continually going on near the palace. Horse-breaking and riding are made much more of sciences in Germany than with us. Every one who mounts a horse thinks it necessary to ride like a dragoon; and his horse must be as supple and as dextrous as if he was to manœuvre in the ranks. The young bucks learn to ride in the Prince's *manege*, and not to hold yourself in all paces as square and erect as if you were armed *cap-a-pie* for a charge, is the height of unhorsemanlike ignorance. I have seen His Excellency the Prince's Equerry, by dint of whip and spur, making a poor foaming animal repeat a pretty sidle, which he did not perform quite correctly, for half an hour together. Every *bourgeois* long-tailed nag, too, is caparisoned *à la militaire*, and ambles and cuts *capriolets* under his stately master like the palfrey of a field-officer. German horses are hard dull animals, capable of much work, and not to be

spoiled by this discipline: but it is found lost labour when tried on English ones, which are much in request, and vastly superior in spirit and shape to the natives. The Mecklenburgh horses are the best in Germany, most resembling ours.

LETTER XVII.

The Court at Stutgard during my stay was devoid of all attractions. The King and Queen, a fond domestic couple, live together in an unostentatious privacy, rarely broken in upon but by a few necessary receptions of the *Corps Diplomatique*, or distinguished visitors. Their marriage was one of mutual affection, as well as of policy on the part of the King. His Majesty separated himself from his former wife, (the present Empress of Austria,) who was strongly attached to him, to gratify the mutual inclination subsisting between him and his present Queen then Duchess of Oldenburg. Though arrangements of this sort are quite *à la mode* in Germany, this was a severe blow to his excellent wife, who bore it with submissive dignity. She was a

Princess of Bavaria; not handsome, but amiable and agreeable. When the marriage was all but arranged, the King, then Crown Prince, visited her at her aunt's, the Duchess of Deux Ponts. The Princess conducted herself with dignity and delicacy, without disguising how agreeable the marriage would be to her. She told the Prince frankly she knew her want of striking personal charms: but she also knew her merits and agreeable qualities; and she recommended him to prolong his visit, and then decide if the latter could make up for the deficiency of the former. The Prince married her from expediency, but without attachment, and always treated her with distant politeness. She was beloved by all ranks in Wirtemberg, and when she left Stutgard the people shed tears, and loaded her with expressions of their good wishes. His Royal Highness gained no popularity by this transaction.

Her marriage with the Emperor of Austria subjected this unfortunate Princess to the painful investigations necessary to procure a divorce for a Catholic wife. As some reward for her sufferings it is, how-

ever, satisfactory to hear, that she is adored by the Emperor, who justly appreciates her merits, and as much beloved by the Austrians as by the people of Wirtemberg.

If the secluded life of the King and Queen speaks well of their domestic tastes, it by no means increases their popularity in their Capital, which, like other little German Capitals, accurately reflects the tone of the Court, is dependent on it for its gaiety, and shares its dulness when it is dull. The upper circles are here a little more extensive than at Carlsruhe; but they are less animated by a social spirit and disposition for amusement. One might suppose that the quietness of the Court would leave individuals more liberty to follow their own plans of enjoyment, and that they would make merry the more freely from the absence of the constraining presence of royalty. But not so in a little German capital — where the Court is all and every thing. Society is composed of courtiers, diplomatists, and *employés*, who look to the Court for their bread and their tone. If the sensorium of life is gloomy, the arteries and mem-

bers obediently sympathise. To indulge in any vivacity of amusement in which the Court has no concern, at all times looks rather like an unseemly spirit of independence or rivalry: but when tranquillity is the avowed order of the day at Court, it would be as rude and inconsiderate as for a dutiful child not to stop his game when papa has got the head-ache.

Besides this, the storms of politics, which generally roll above the heads of the little states, have lately descended low enough to cloud the sun-shine of the kingdom of Wirtemberg, and have created, even in the higher ranks, some discontented spirits, who never contribute much to the gaiety of society.

The king is an active man of talent, courage, and firmness — of a small but important figure — reserved, and little polite — possessing, like his father, more intellect than feeling, but considered warm and hearty in his attachments. His military distinction — his constant opposition, from boyhood, to the severe reign of his father — his detestation of the French, which induced him to feign illness to avoid com-

manding his father's troops, under Napoleon, gained him much popularity as Hereditary Prince. But many expectations were disappointed, on his accession, apparently without any fault of his own. His Majesty found his kingdom in a critical and difficult condition — and with dispositions which impartial persons admit to be highly liberal, he soon found it impossible to satisfy the clamorous demands of an opposition of malcontents, rather than patriots. By the effect of one of those convulsions in politics, which sometimes amalgamate the most opposite interests, this opposition consisted of a junction of the *mediatized* Princes and the champions of the people. The former still smarting under their cruel degradation from sovereigns to subjects, were naturally ready to take every possible revenge on the government which had humbled them; and gladly made common cause with the people whom they had just before oppressed, in the hope of regaining some of their lost privileges.

It is curious to observe how these ill-assorted allies contended, hand in hand,

against the proposals of the King with views the most opposite. In the constitution proposed by his Majesty, the parliament of the kingdom was to consist of an upper and a lower Chamber. This was violently opposed by the States — by the mediatized Princes, because their ambition was to form a separate Chamber of themselves, instead of being classed with the other aristocracy — and by the people, because they hoped to give the democracy a greater ascendant in one Chamber of Commons and Nobles. The mediatized Princes wanted to retain their privilege of taxing the inhabitants of their former sovereignties — the King proposed that the taxes should be voted by the Assembly of States and paid by all subjects, equally; but the States not satisfied with this, loudly demanded the custody of the public chest, which they enjoyed under their old much-lauded constitution. After having voted the supplies, they wished to dole them out piece-meal, as they considered occasion required. The King thought this an undue encroachment on the executive, and the *Caisse publique* became a grand bone of contention. At present every

thing remains stationary, but unsettled. When the States, after tumultuous discussions, refused the constitution proposed (securing civil and religious liberty, the freedom of the press, and all that reasonable subjects, one would imagine, could desire), his Majesty had no other course left than to dismiss them. Their violent partizans, whom one now and then meets, even in the higher circles, assert that this step was owing to the influence of the ministers of different German powers, who were interested to prevent the acquisition of a free constitution by the Wirtembergers, from an apprehension of the consequences of the example.

Since the dismissal, the King has necessarily reigned according to his will and pleasure. Some of his subjects have refused to pay the taxes levied by his authority — but no serious discontents have displayed themselves. The King's Government is economical and prudent — he has reduced the enormous expences of the household — reformed many abuses — and the people are no longer oppressed by the huntings and tyrannical caprices which made his father's

reign odious. Among the *people* he is unquestionably more popular. The *upper circles* are filled with complainers who lament the gloomy tranquillity of the Court, the reserve of his Majesty, and accuse him of injustice for dismissing the cringing servants of the old King, who like Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, were often set to spy upon his actions in his disputes with his father. One nobleman, who now fills an office about the Dowager Queen, professed to distinguish himself from the herd of courtiers by his friendship for the Hereditary Prince, and his impartiality in his differences with his parent. Among the first papers which his present Majesty discovered in his father's cabinet, were letters written by this seeming friend to the late King unveiling himself as an authorised spy upon his conduct.

The King, on coming to the throne, was thus compelled to dismiss most of the ministers and court officers as summarily as the kangaroos and camels of his father — in some instances, to the great inconvenience of persons of rank, but small fortune. The Queen, who is a *femme d'esprit*,

and has unlimited influence over his Majesty, is charged with much of this; and is considered to reign supreme in the little cabinet. She has all the tact and vivacity of a Russian — fine eyes animating a plain countenance — a graceful figure, and fascinating manners, which, however, rather captivate than inspire the confidence of her subjects. She is a domestic woman, and it was pleasing to see her driving out with one of her little children on her lap, with very little state. She has two daughters by the King, besides the two little Princes of Oldenburg.

The causes I have mentioned conspire with others to render society at Stutgard more stagnant than is usual in the German residences. Some of the nobility and ambassadors have, however, pleasant houses, where evening visitors are entertained with the usual good-humoured amusements. The houses of the Prussian ambassador and the Grand Master of the Court were of this sort. The family of the former are particularly distinguished for amiable qualities, and possess all that superior refinement of manners, and culti-

vation of mind, which often distinguish the Germans of the north. To their friendly hospitality, and sensible conversation, we were indebted for many pleasant hours during our stay at Stutgard.

A general subject of conversation in the gay circles is the subjugation of the sensible heart of His Majesty of Prussia by a fair damsel whose inequality of years and of birth rendered it doubly romantic. This fortunate fair is the daughter of the French ambassador at Dresden — very young, and of charms well deserving of Royal admiration. Love, which recognises no distinctions, has exacted from its elevated votary as arduous proofs of devotion as it could have required of a humbler swain; and the King has been as assiduous in following the steps of this favoured nymph at Dresden, at Toeplitz, and at Berlin, as he could have been to secure a dowried daughter of the oldest house in christendom. When the lady repaired to Paris in the summer, His Majesty, as you know, lost no time in putting on his romantic *incognito*, and surprising her at the

Tuilleries as the Count Ruppin; and while the politicians of Europe were drawing ominous inferences from this friendly meeting of the Sovereigns, the saloons in Germany were admiring the constancy of the monarch, and envying the honours of its fair object. The Prussians, however, who would have done the same if she had been a German, could not conceal their soreness that a daughter of the nation they hate, imitate, and affect to despise, should hold their monarch in such triumphant chains; and when a report spread that a left-handed marriage either existed, or was on the *tapis*, they were indignant beyond measure. Some German friends who visited the Court of Dresden about the time of the King of Prussia's crusade to Paris, described this as the universal subject of conversation. The Prussians were biting their lips at the compliment paid to their rivals, to the heartfelt amusement of the Saxons, whose detestation of their neighbours, aggrandised at their expence, exceeds all bounds. I have been informed, by persons with every pre-

judice in favour of the existing state of things, that Saxons of all ranks avow their strongest wish to be an indulgence of exasperated revenge on these proud neighbours.

LETTER XVIII.

HAVING given you one or two specimens of the gaieties of the capitals of Baden and Hesse, I will not expose you to the *ennui* of accompanying me into the saloons of the metropolis of Wirtemberg — but as life passes in the same way, with the same pleasures, the same occupations (with slight shades of difference) in all the little capitals, I prefer sending you a general sketch of their average society and resources. Of the twenty-five or thirty Courts and Capitals, which Germany contains, there are only about four — those of Berlin, Vienna, Dresden, and Munich — more considerable than those I have visited, which are about of *octavo* dimensions. *Ex his disce omnes* may, therefore, fairly be said with regard to the whole herd — these four *folios*, and Weimar, the little Athens, excepted; and you may make a

pretty good guess at the little duodecimo Hohenzollerns, Hombergs, Lippes, Waldecks, &c. who enjoy whole thirds or fifths of a vote at the Diet, by imagining the national army 50 or 100 strong—the Prime Minister in the enjoyment of about 200*l.* a-year—and the Court composed of a Grand Master, an Aid-de-Camp, and one solitary Maid of Honour, residing in a garret in the palace, and enjoying the title of Excellency, 30*l.* a-year, and—her wax candles.

The ordinary style of visiting in the little capitals, is confined to *reunions particulieres*, or circles in the evening—dinners being as unfrequent in private houses as they are common and a matter of course at Court. This is chiefly owing to the limited fortunes of the nobility, which are by no means adequate to ostentation and solid comfort united.—Now the German noble likes both, but gives a preference to the former. Few men have a more lively relish for the good things of the table, as he plainly manifests at the court dinners—but for the sake of his carriage and horses, and laced liveries, he sometimes submits to let bread soup, *pommes de terre*, and savoury anticipations of

the approaching court entertainment, cut rather a conspicuous figure in his family meal. The absorbing influence of the little court, also checks any entertainments of splendour or preparation. Not to say that it would be uncourtier-like to rival the sovereign, one third of the first circles eat daily *ex officio* meals at the palace; while the remainder are constantly in apprehensive hope of the gracious summons from the *Fourrier* of the Prince, who, equally despotic in politics and politeness, admits no evasion of his hospitable commands. Thus none but the humble *non-Vons* are fairly masters of their time — all others must make engagements *Duce volente*. The court dinner is over, however, and every one disencumbered of swords and sattins by six o'clock. An hour or two are then perhaps spent at the theatre, half out of compliment to the Royal Host or Hostess, with whom one has dined; who will sometimes bespeak a crowded house by their friendly "*Vous allez au spectacle ce soir?*" — a question denoting too well Sovereign wishes for a good courtier to hesitate.

The circles, in the evening, are pleasant

and familiar — and you are received with a friendliness which proves that the want of more substantial compliments does not arise from inhospitality. One or two houses of the first nobility or Ambassadors are generally open to company every evening — once initiated, you are always welcome. The saloons are open and tea, made in a family way, by the young Mademoiselle La Comtesse, or La Baronne, is in progress from seven or eight, till nine or ten. When the party is large, the drain on the resources of conversation, not too interesting or too abundant, is relieved by card-tables set out for the grave ribboned and starred papas; while the young people find a never-failing resource in an extempore waltz, or the pleasures of *Comment l'aimez vous? pourquoi l'aimez vous? Qu'en voulez vous faire?* and similar *petits jeux de societé*, among which, *Colin Maillard* and hunt-the-ring are by no means despised. — Conjuration with cards, *la bonne fortune*, and little drawing-room sorceries, I have seen amuse and occupy a circle of dowagers and misses for a whole evening; and an accomplishment in these mystic arts, with

other agreeable qualities, has sometimes helped an enterprising young Bourgeois to overleap the barrier of birth, and gain a footing, with eclat, in the circles *comme il faut.* At first he is looked upon a little *à travers les epaules.* No one ever saw him at court, — and his fitness for society is not vouched for by the cross of an order, or the knot of an aide-de-camp; but he is found droll and entertaining — he makes the dowagers laugh, suggests new games, lards his cabalistic divinations* with an engaging stock of compliments — and the young baronesses, too sentimental to be very haughty, at last vote the Bourgeois beau *très bonne societé.* This is partly the result of the good-humoured *bon-hommie* of the German character, which frequently relaxes the *hauteur* of their systems — and

* Any thing connected with the superstitious is quite in keeping with the German character. A grave Prince, whom I have the honour of knowing, never goes to Paris without having his fortune told by the famous Madlle. Norman; and an amiable Princess who apprehends evil from every thing of a dark colour, one day stopped the Emperor of Russia, as he was on the point of drinking her health, in a glass of Burgundy, and made his Imperial Majesty change it for Hock.

partly of a readiness to catch at any source of amusement that can enliven the *ennui* of contracted circles of persons without resources.

Conversation affords the most precarious chance of interest or amusement. The men are superior to the women. The Ambassadors from the larger states sometimes possess knowledge of the world and cultivation of mind; but the nobles of the court are often heavy *petit maitres*, or coarse debauchees, the former of whom seek to adorn society, while the latter judiciously avoid it. A gallant War Minister of my acquaintance, is laced up in his stays every morning like a lady — while a Grand Master of Forests, and a Minister of State, muddle their heads with small Rhenish, at the Post-house every evening.

But the want of rational topics of common interest is the main cause that gives an insipid frivolity to conversation, equal to all that the decriers of market-towns or genteel villages, in England, can conceive. The Germans are a literary nation — but literary genius here, as elsewhere, rarely wears the coronet, and without that the bays are no

recommendation. The Professor is rarely a *Herr Von*—his wife, a good housewife, cannot speak French—and these are exclusions from court and the saloons of the nobility. At Weimar alone the constellation of laureats have been qualified, by patents, to sit at the table of their miniature Augustus; and the great Goëthe and his brethren, I understand, wield their bags and swords not less gracefully than their pens. —But in the south of Germany, literature is still looked upon as the musty old bookworm whose habits little qualify him for the drawing-room — and in the absence of his imposing company, frivolity and dullness revel. The ladies, in general, barely know the titles of Schiller's works —they have wept over Werter, know something of Kotzebue—and have sometimes studied the poetry and tales in some of the swarms of fashionable almanacs.—Politics, which in England are a rallying point among the most stupid, have here no interest. The politics of the *German nation* are too vague —the politics of the *little monarchy*, are matters of petty routine, which interest none but *employés* and Chancellery clerks.

The only subjects which come home to all, and which are discussed with lively interest, are — the opera of last Sunday — the approaching gala, in honour of some travelling Highness — speculations as to the length of his stay — and whether he will or will not lodge at the hotel, from being rather too poor to pay the usual 100 louis to the servants of the palace — the prospect of a court mourning, the amours of a great or little prince, or remarks on the recent ennobling of a batch of Generals' ladies who (poor souls!) can't speak three words of French. This is the average level of conversation, and the persons of superior acquirements whom one occasionally meets, never venture to interrupt it by the obtrusion of any thing more rational.

With all the occasional languor and heaviness of the intervals between the stimulating *waltz* and the drawing-room games, this society has however one charm which redeems a host of defects — that of natural good humour and the absence of pretension. The freshness of nature and simplicity — little improved by cultivation 'tis true, but little spoilt by affectation — are often to be

found here in a higher degree than in more refined and cultivated circles. The cant of criticism which is afraid to trifle, the ambition of wit and satire, and the dread of compromising the dignity of cleverness, have not yet appeared in these unlettered circles to damp the free flow of mirth and good spirits. The joyless amusements of fashionable exhibition, and the *ennui* of extravagant searches after pleasure are also for larger and more splendid societies — compared to which, those of a small German Court and Capital have something of a primitive nature and simplicity as well as much of a primitive rust.

The *jour de fête*, or the birth-day of the Sovereign or any of his family, creates a commotion among all ranks, which a little enlivens the ordinary tranquillity — some would say dullness — of the Residence. Promotions of the servants of government take place in abundance — Many a plain Baron walks forth from the Cabinet an Excellency — Crosses and ribbons are showered about in profusion — from the Grand Cross of his Highness's Order, which glitters on the breast of the great digni-

taries of the Court, to the badges of the fourth or fifth class, which decorate the *Fourrier* or *Major Domo*, figuring behind his Highness's chair at table. The parade is more than ordinarily splendid. The troops in their best uniforms. The nobility, *corps diplomatique*, and *employés* — including those from the provinces, who crowd the residence on these occasions — pay their felicitations in the morning to their sovereign in his cabinet. Every namesake, male and female, of his Highness partakes, of course, in the honours of the *jour de fête;* and it is an arduous task for a stranger to know, by intuition, every Louis or Louisa, Frederic or Frederica, to whom it behoves him by no means to omit due congratulations. At two or three o'clock the *grand gala* at court takes place — distinguished from ordinary dinners by the presence of a number of strangers — the best liveries of the domestics — the gala uniforms of the courtiers — the long trains — the double portions of rouge and diamonds — the absence of all spinsters, and the unusual length and ceremony of the entertainment. The opera, in the evening, is

made pre-eminently grand and attractive — the orchestra, all in uniform — and it is often an etiquette for the Court and company to contribute to the brilliance of the house by appearing in their full court costume. The day not unfrequently concludes by a grand ball or assembly given by an Ambassador, or some loyal leader of the *haut ton*, who has the supreme satisfaction of seeing his rooms crowded with stars and court dresses; and who to fill up a splendid throng, invites a gross of subaltern officers*, by a general invitation sent to the general, at head quarters, to be dispensed to such of the worthy captains and lieutenants as he considers best fitted for society *comme il faut*.

It is curious to observe how the scandalous and censorious spirit of the little

* An exception to the rules of rank is made in favour of the military — officers of the rank of captain being admissible at court, whether noble or not. — But on occasion of court balls, partners for the fair waltzers are so much in request, that a general invitation is often sent to head-quarters *pour les officiers dansants*. Those who come are, of course, obliged to fulfil the condition of their visit, by never allowing their heels a moment's repose while there is a lady ready to dance.

town is mixed up with the fashionable licentiousness of the Court and metropolis; and how the worthy Courtiers are driven to compromise between their equal tastes for criticising their neighbours, and partaking their delinquencies. Our respectable spinsters, and tea-drinking matrons, frame their moral code in conscious purity, and fearless of falling under their own enactments. They are, therefore, severe and sweeping—but the German drawing-rooms, not being prepared for similar sacrifices, and yet willing to enjoy the pleasures of censorship, are obliged to legislate with a cautious lenity, of which all in turn stand in need. Innocent trifles are, therefore, severely noted; but capital offences come off honourably acquitted. If you talk to one belle for five minutes longer than the rest, or make the *agréable* with any zeal to your fair neighbour at the Court Dinner, every eye draws inferences—it swells the catalogue of events for discussion, and you are continually saluted with insinuating enquiries after the pretty foot, the pink sattins, or the red roses, of your suspected favourite, in the true tea-table country-

town style. But not half so much would be said or thought of it if you were notoriously in the most intimate of all possible relations with the lady — that would be an ordinary occurrence — you would be invited at the same time by your considerate acquaintances — and the connection would be generally recognised with all the easy liberality of a Court. A lady, arranging her party, said "I invite Monsieur —— and his wife, of course. He is a pleasant man; but to keep him in good humour he must have his *belle* Madame ———, and then her husband must come with her, though you know he is little better than a *garçon d'ecurie*." I happened to sit by the neglected wife, an elegant woman, who was said to feel her situation. Her husband and his *inamorata* were generally together, not flirting, or making love, but enjoying the quiet understanding of an established tender connection; while the Baron without mate talked with his wife's beau as freely as any other, and lounged about in the happy tranquillity of settled indifference. The public intercourse of the two sexes is guarded by all the little

restraints of the nicest delicacy. It is as much as one can venture to do to hand a lady down stairs to her carriage—and no lady ever takes a gentleman's arm in the street. But the gravest imprudences, which ought in consistency to call forth all the severity of these rigid censors, find every one tolerant, and even good-naturedly indifferent. Society is, in fact, filled with complex relations of sentiment (so called); and who can blame very loudly what is perhaps their own case to-day, or may be to-morrow, or was the other day? For Cupid may here safely address every one,

> "*Qui que tu sois — Voila ton maitre!*
> *Ou il est, ou il fut, ou il doit l'être.*"

The difference, in fact, between the morals of little capitals and the large ones, such as Berlin and Vienna, whose licentiousness is proverbial, appears to be little more than that between bold, dashing, assured corruption, and that which is somewhat more timid, contriving, and hypocritical— something like the contrast in Cowper between the gay splendour of fashion and the pinch-

ing shifts of the humble partaker of its pleasures.

> " All catch the frenzy downward from her Grace,
> Whose flambeaux flash against the morning skies,
> And gild our chamber cielings as they pass,
> To her who, frugal only that her thrift
> May feed excesses she can ill afford,
> Is hackneyed home unlacqueyed." —

Vice is here on a petty, provincial scale. A grave noble, of diplomatic dignity, got, the other day, a severe thrashing from a private soldier, the sweetheart of a poor girl whom he was pursuing with offensive proposals. A Vienna Lothario would have lost his life in a duel for a Duchess. That is all the difference.

The narrowness of the social circles gives public opinion some little more influence on conduct than in the shrouding vastness of a great metropolis: but where virtue has no more solid basis, this influence will make few people virtuous—it will, however, make many hypocritical as long as they can keep up the mask, and strictly decorous where decorum costs nothing.

The little capitals thus often contrive to unite the immorality of a great metropolis

with all the dullness and the stagnation of a provincial town. The absence of all the serious political occupation which engages more gigantic courts, leaves nothing to check or vary — not the unbridled gaiety of amusement, but — the round of heavy frivolities, and the pursuit of scandal and licentious pleasures. — The *ton* of the Court and the elegant circles is also often as *humdrum* and provincial as that of any genteel borough in Great Britain. Many of the maids of honour — good substantial persons, all of unimpeachable family — have perhaps hardly crossed the frontier of the little State, except in the *suite* of the Princess on a summer visit to the baths, or to some neighbouring reigning cousin; and the noble damsels who take observing hints from the official belles of the Court on their periodical visit to the Palace have much more the air and the manners of the prim misses of a country town, than the *cynosures* of a gay Court circle.

The torpid influence of the petty sphere in which people move, communicates itself, in fact, to the minds, the manners, the occupations of all. The faculties of the

whole residence are concentrated in its microscopic pursuits, intrigues, ceremonies, and routines; and as the idea of belonging to the capital of the state — although that Capital is a Lilliput — satisfies every one with their own consequence and dignity, their curiosity is rarely called forth as to what is passing on the great arena around them. Each little state is "itself alone," and each Sovereign of a nut-shell "accounts himself King of infinite space." Their own Grand Duke, or Landgrave — their own Palace and Theatre — their own handful of books called "the Court Library" — and the few third rate Teniersses, spars, and monsters in brandy and water, yclept "the Court Museum," are, to the little optics of the Residence, the *ne plus ultra* of splendour and taste. The Gazette and Journals of the capital, wretchedly printed, on coarse paper, are little more than collections of notices and official announcements from long-titled authorities, promotions, and conferrings of dignities, lists of arrivals at the inns, without a word of original writing or remark, eked out by a gleaning from the foreign

papers, made up of what is alone interesting to the little dependants of the Court — the movements, audiences, and journeys of Princes, ambassadors, &c. With such resources, among a people of so little natural vivacity as the Germans, is it to be wondered if the capital of the German Prince is as dull and as lifeless as a street of Herculaneum? The eternal larum of the drums on mounting and relieving guard, and the rumble along the streets of a heavy baron's calêche, the only sounds which interrupt the ordinary stillness, are symbols of the dreary monotony which reigns throughout the place. If you wish to seek the repose and tranquillity of unbroken *ennui*, I recommend you to use your interest at the Foreign Office to get appointed *Chargé d'Affaires* at a second or third rate German Court.

LETTER XIX.

Ludwigsburg, the favourite seat of the late King, and the present residence of our compatriot, his widow, lies in a fine open picturesque country, three leagues from Stutgard. The neat town, the ample white palace, the gardens, the avenues, and plantations have an air infinitely more imposing and cheerful than any thing in the Royal Capital. You enter from Stutgard, by a handsome wide street, one side formed by the regular buildings of the town, and the other by the stately avenues of the small park surrounding the royal mansion. A wide street branches off to the right, crossing the royal inclosures, and separated by a range of iron palisades from the stiff formal pleasure-grounds, ornamented with fountains, urns, parterres, and gravel walks, immediately before the palace. The palace presents a broad, white, handsome front,

towards this garden, though not so striking as the massy *corps de logis*, forming the back front, which is the residence of the Dowager Queen.

On the day that I passed at Ludwigsburg I regretted that her Majesty's indisposition deprived me of the honour of seeing her. The Count ——, her Grand Master, an intelligent and friendly man, spoke to me in high and affectionate terms of the amiable qualities of his mistress, and described her manners as simple and affable in the highest degree. Every one with whom I conversed at Ludwigsburg, as well as Stutgard, told the same tale. She was a "*recht brave wohlthätige dame*," "a right brave benevolent lady," "*man hat sie gern in Ludwigsburg*," "one has her willingly at Ludwigsburg" — were the plebeian expressions of loyal satisfaction, beyond which the phlegmatic German idioms never rise in compliment to any one. Her Majesty's mode of life is simple — she dines about one — an hour or two earlier than most Princes and Princesses of the country — sees little company — but is happy to receive English visitors — she spends the

evening, after six, the hour of tea, in the society of her little court composed entirely of Germans. She is regular in her attendance on Divine Worship, in the German language, in a little parlour fitted up as a chapel, in the palace. Her Majesty is described by all to have been attached, with a devoted sincerity, to the King. He, probably, in the main, appreciated her affections, but as is ordinarily the case with monarchs of vindictive passions, was a tyrant in his house as well as on the throne. Even occasional violent and coarse treatment could not shake her constant affection. She attended him in his last illness with unwearied tenderness, and was by his side when he expired. The Queen shows an affectionate attachment to all his old servants, most of them now out of place. The present king visits his mother-in-law generally twice a week and treats her with much respectful attention.

The Count accompanied me about the gardens which are large and laid out in the English taste, with all the picturesque accompaniments of lakes or rather *lake-lets*,

(to use the German privilege of universal diminutives,) cascades, rivers, pavilions, aviaries, &c. highly delightful to see, but not equally so to describe. The wild face of nature is often interesting in description; but nature tamed by a court gardener will hardly bear again taming by a picturesque describer. The mock ruins are a little more happy *fac similes* of real piles than those which often adorn German pleasure grounds. The Emichs-burg a round mouldering tower with a few interesting holes and a top picturesquely ragged is the principal — standing on a rock tolerably wild, from which a cascade rushes with a respectable impetuosity. The view from the tower over the neighbouring country is delightful; and to complete its Gothic interest, the late king christened it the Emichsburg, from an old ancestor Count Emich of Wirtemberg.

The *Spiel Platz* or Game Place, a large open area, presents the machinery for most of those delectable amusements which form the zest of Bartlemy and other English fairs — swings, round-abouts, nine pins, &c. A handsome pavilion contains four handsome wooden nags, saddled with great costliness,

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papers, made up of what is alone interesting to the little dependants of the Court — the movements, audiences, and journeys of Princes, ambassadors, &c. With such resources, among a people of so little natural vivacity as the Germans, is it to be wondered if the capital of the German Prince is as dull and as lifeless as a street of Herculaneum? The eternal larum of the drums on mounting and relieving guard, and the rumble along the streets of a heavy baron's calêche, the only sounds which interrupt the ordinary stillness, are symbols of the dreary monotony which reigns throughout the place. If you wish to seek the repose and tranquillity of unbroken *ennui*, I recommend you to use your interest at the Foreign Office to get appointed *Chargé d'Affaires* at a second or third rate German Court.

whole residence are concentrated in its microscopic pursuits, intrigues, ceremonies, and routines; and as the idea of belonging to the capital of the state — although that Capital is a Lilliput — satisfies every one with their own consequence and dignity, their curiosity is rarely called forth as to what is passing on the great arena around them. Each little state is "itself alone," and each Sovereign of a nut-shell "accounts himself King of infinite space." Their own Grand Duke, or Landgrave — their own Palace and Theatre — their own handful of books called "the Court Library" — and the few third rate Teniersses, spars, and monsters in brandy and water, yclept "the Court Museum," are, to the little optics of the Residence, the *ne plus ultra* of splendour and taste. The Gazette and Journals of the capital, wretchedly printed, on coarse paper, are little more than collections of notices and official announcements from long-titled authorities, promotions, and conferrings of dignities, lists of arrivals at the inns, without a word of original writing or remark, eked out by a gleaning from the foreign

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evening, after six, the hour of tea, in the society of her little court composed entirely of Germans. She is regular in her attendance on Divine Worship, in the German language, in a little parlour fitted up as a chapel, in the palace. Her Majesty is described by all to have been attached, with a devoted sincerity, to the King. He, probably, in the main, appreciated her affections, but as is ordinarily the case with monarchs of vindictive passions, was a tyrant in his house as well as on the throne. Even occasional violent and coarse treatment could not shake her constant affection. She attended him in his last illness with unwearied tenderness, and was by his side when he expired. The Queen shows an affectionate attachment to all his old servants, most of them now out of place. The present king visits his mother-in-law generally twice a week and treats her with much respectful attention.

The Count accompanied me about the gardens which are large and laid out in the English taste, with all the picturesque accompaniments of lakes or rather *lake-lets*,

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ness when the country was distracted by the first entry of the French, aided by anxieties of love for a lady of great beauty and merit. The Count's wife died a few days after him; and this lady, who was sincerely attached to him, thus lived to see removed too late the obstacle that had opposed their happiness. She survived the Count some years: but she languished in ill health, and never revived after the shock of his death. The King took charge of his two sons, and educated them under his own eyes with a paternal attention. The grief of all ranks at the loss of this excellent man was unexampled; and the unvarying friendship and gratitude which the King showed both to him and his family are proofs of some good qualities of heart, too often obscured in His Majesty by violent passions and ostentatious pride.

You must not set the late King down as quite an ordinary despot, or form your idea of him solely from his menagerie, his gingerbread crowns, his oppressive *chasses*, or the excavation in his dinner table to admit his corpulence. He appears to have been one of those anomalous

compounds of bad and good which so often occur in life to falsify the divisions of the world too frequently made into monsters and angels. Buonaparte (no mean judge as far as talents are concerned) used to say, he was the only Sovereign in Germany capable of reigning. He was a man of strong intellect and cultivated taste, but a tyrant, and an acknowledged coward; with something imposing in his exterior, and possessing that ascendant over those around him which violent temper, without masculine character, is insufficient to produce. His passions were unbridled, but they had not quite corrupted his heart. He often made reparation to those he had injured. His manners were dignified and agreeable. A lady who used to be much in the circles and card-parties at Ludwigsburg, without being at all connected with the Court, told me she never met with a man "*qui possedoit mieux l'art de parler.*" The Queen was as much afraid of him as attached to him. His reign was severe; but with the exception of the havoc of hunting and some other arbitrary follies, its severity fell, principally where, in spite of its injus-

tice, it did least harm — on the noblesse. He cut down their privileges, made many serve as common soldiers in his army, and constantly vexed them by tyrannical seizures and oppressions; while his feeble neighbours were purchasing their flattery at the expense of their other subjects. He was in short an able not an *imbecile* tyrant — with some grandeur mixed with much littleness in his pride, and some little nobleness of nature in his ferocity.

I regretted that circumstances deprived me of the pleasure of seeing Danekker, the distinguished artist whose works I have before mentioned. He is a native of Stutgard, born of humble parents, and owed the means of cultivating his genius to the patronage of the Duke Charles, predecessor of the late king. The early bent of his genius which first led him to a fondness for drawing and made him once spoil some smooth hewn stones by scratching flowers and figures on them with a nail, afterwards appears to have become too strong to be checked by the opposition of his parents. When the Duke offered to admit one of their children into an excellent public seminary his parents

refused from a false idea that the students were only designed to recruit the ranks. The boy entreated in vain permission to accept the offer, and his importunities were at last only to be silenced by a confinement in his chamber. This gave him leisure to brood over his favourite objects, and to devise a scheme for accomplishing them. He contrived to communicate from his window with eight or nine of his comrades, whom he persuaded to stand by his cause, and to accompany him boldly to the Duke himself, at Ludwigsburg, to entreat an admission into the academy. The boys announced themselves, were admitted and kindly received by the Duke, who was delighted with the resolution and boldness of the young would-be academician of thirteen. He was immediately placed in the seminary where he found the means of a liberal education which afforded him a fund of acquirements useful in his profession. He studied here nine years, then made pedestrian tours to Paris and to Rome, profiting almost unaided by the opportunities they afforded him. In Italy he received kindnesses from Canova and

Trippel, and was recalled by his Prince in 1790, to his great grief, from the bright skies and the noble relics of Rome, to the fogs and cramped occupations of Stutgard. By way of recompence he was made Court Sculptor and Professor at the academy, with a salary of 800 florins, now considerably increased, for which he is obliged to execute all the orders of the court. Danekker's history adds one to the many instances of the early developement and buoyant character which have so often distinguished genius of the first rank.

LETTER XX.

Taking leave of the polite Grand Master at Ludwigsburg, I started at midnight for Heilbron in the Diligence; a machine which, in Germany, surpasses in dirt, tediousness, motley society, and bad organization, all that you can imagine from observation of those of France or the Netherlands. It affords a curious instance of that strict regard to form and system which the Germans often unite with a miserable disregard of essential comfort. Every thing is perplexed with trifling regulations. The seats are all exactly numbered, and the *Herr Diligence Secretair* (Mr. Diligence Secretary) gives you an elaborate printed ticket to entitle you to one designated spot in the delectable machine: but dirt has generally obliterated the numbers, and the passengers are half an hour squabbling themselves into their appro-

priate places. Your luggage must be sent two or three hours before, or the *Herr Conducteur* cannot be put out of his way to find a place for it. It must be all locked up in a basket, and yet it is often lost. There is a regulated tax to the postillions, but they always grumble if you do not pay more. It is all systematic confusion and organised inconvenience. My place being taken late, I had the felicity of being squeezed, with three others, into a *Bei Chaise*, a crazy vehicle rummaged out of the remises in the yard to carry the overplus passengers. My companions were a couple of heavy speechless Germans, and a young black-eyed bride-elect travelling to Wurtzburg to meet her *Brautigam*, (Bridegroom,) concerning whom, his family, his trade, his person, and prospects, she entertained us with a succession of lively particulars. Her *brautigam* gave her the ring on her hand. Her *brautigam* was a good-tempered, pretty man, and all his family were right good people; and they were very fond of her; and she was sure she should be very happy. In half an hour the girl, in simplicity of heart, had made

confidants of us all. The Germans paid little attention to her; they slept, and snored, in spite of the cold, which the vehicle ill excluded. After four hours' freezing and jolting, we stopped about four in the morning at Besigheim, a little town famous for its wine. Instead of hastening on in order not to prolong a moment the delights of travelling at the rate of a league in an hour, in a stinking carriage, into which the rain had just begun to penetrate, it was more consistent with German ideas to daudle an hour in procuring the muddling comfort of coffee, schnapps, &c. at a miserable inn. The poor *Haus Knechts* (house boys) and kitchen maid must needs be routed out of their "short and broken snooze" in their beds in the kitchen. A wood fire was presently blazing in one of the furnaces of the fire-place — a jar of ready-made cold coffee was set into the middle of it — while the active scullion ground an additional quantum, fetched fresh fuel, boiled the milk, fined the coffee, and slaved and bustled about with a smutty face of smiling good humour, which none

but a good drudging German woman could have preserved under similar circumstances. She expected nothing from the guests, and overflowed with thankfulness when she received a few *kreutzers*. After our motley party had enjoyed many a replenished pot of coffee, and repeated glass of bad spirits, we groped our way through the dark to our seats, and after five hours more of tedious jolting, arrived at Heilbron, a dirty decayed town, in a fine country, on the Neckar.

Heilbron, once distinguished among the Free Cities of Germany, now belongs to the kingdom of Wirtemberg. The place has still twelve or fifteen mercantile houses, and forms a considerable depot for colonial merchandize, which is brought up the Neckar, and conveyed to various parts of Suabia and Bavaria by land. The King of Wirtemberg has tried in various ways to attract its trade to the little town of Canstadt, his summer residence: but it clings to its old haunt, in spite of Royal allurements. Several families of nobility still reside here, and the place has a tolerably bustling air, plentifully mixed with dirt, shabbiness,

and gloom, announcing that it is not what it has been.

Heilbron and its neighbourhood are rich in mementos of the old doughty iron-handed champion of Germany, Goetz Von Berlichingen. I saw the old tower on the ramparts in which he was confined, and his epistle to the Burgomaster and Magistrates in expostulation is preserved in the city archives.

The table d'hôte of the inn presented a living memento more curious than any — a Mr. Von Berlichingen, who actually boasts some of the Chevalier's pure blood in his veins, though without his iron hand or iron temperament. He was an old superannuated Postmaster-General, with the cross of the Wirtemberg Order; and from his age and second childishness in a state of complete pupillage to the waiters and landlord of the table. This descendant of the grim hero was hardly suffered to eat what he liked, or to drink wine, or change his plate, without the host's permission — restrictions which looked doubly cruel from the well-preserved respectability of the old gentle-

man's appearance. But his great ancestor himself might have lived to a similar end.

"From Marlbro's eyes the streams of dotage flow,
And Swift expires a driveller and a show."

From Heilbron to Neckar Gemünd the open fertile country presents nothing beyond that mediocrity of the picturesque which consists in gentle rises, well-cultivated fields, scattered villages, and pleasant avenues. We stopped to bait our horses a moment at a little village called Furfeld, where we found some motley guests crowding round the stove of the dirty post-house. Among these I presently recognised a little Baron of sixteen, whom I had known at Carlsruhe, where he was studying military tactics at the Cadet School. He had walked from Carlsruhe to see his uncle, a crusty old noble, the Seigneur of the village; but it was easy to see that my young friend found "metal more attractive" in the fair daughters of the postmaster and their dirty parlour, than in the aristocratic honours of his uncle's dreary *chateau*. He was obliged to return to his military duties at Carlsruhe that day, and

intended to perform the journey of above fifty miles on foot, assuring us that he knew all the field paths and short cuts, and evidently contemplating his pedestrian task with much less dread than the separation from the two pretty girls, who stood with simple looks, confessing their participation in his low spirits. The young *Frei-Herr*, however, plucking up courage, girded on his knapsack, saluted the kind matronly Postmistress, shook hands with the stiff father, gave a farewell kiss to each of the damsels, and, bowing to us, walked off with all the self-possession he could muster. The scene reminded one of an adventure in Fielding, — or might have furnished a picture to the poet of the present day, whose muse delights in the reality of humble materials. The simplicity of unsophisticated feeling got the better of the prejudices of rank, even where they are most arbitrary; and the young Baron of one of the oldest families in Suabia saluted the humble village hostess with the tenderness of a son — perhaps remembering from his studies at the Gymnasium the poet's genial advice:

"*Crede non illam tibi de scelestâ*
Plebe dilectam, neque sic fidelem
Sic lucro aversam potuisse nasci
Matre pudendâ."

A little before Neckar Gemünd, we approached the fine horizon of wooded mountains which had bounded our view for some distance. A break in the chain, which appeared till we were close upon them majestically continuous, admitted the high road to pass into the narrow valley on the other side. The effect was an instantaneous change of scene. We entered the valley between two majestic mountains, rearing their broad round woody heads in substantial state, and in a moment were on the precipitous brink of the river, along which, under the rocks and mountains of the left bank the high road runs — sometimes coasting round the promontories which indent the course of the stream — at others winding to the left round the bays and angles, where the liquid element has been too powerful for the solid. The scene is a miniature representation of the beauties of the Rhine, which, by the bye, I have not yet introduced to your acquaintance. The

Neckar has not half the breadth or the majesty of the god of rivers; the mountains are proportionally smaller—but, like the banks of the Rhine, they smile under the smooth trim vineyards which crown their rough heads, and which remind one, for their contrast with the rugged features they adorn, of the green ivy chaplet decorating the brows of the old hard-featured Silenus. The opposite bank is the limit of the wild castle-bearing and ghost-teeming mountains of the Odenwald, whose heads rise one above the other, covered with a shaggy brushwood and forest; while the immediate banks of the stream, present gentler slopes adorned by the delicate green of the vineyards, or orchards, and trim inclosures, encircling the spires and villages on the edge of the river. Sometimes a convent, with its chapel and belfry, or a sort of modern chateau, embosomed in poplars and shrubs, seems to repose under the shelter of the mountains and woods.

Neckar Gemünd is a neat little town, which we entered by a gate adorned by the arms of the old Electors Palatine. It

stands at the very edge of the stream, faced on the opposite bank by a grand massy wall of red rock which extends far into the mountain, and forms one of the quarries from whence the multitude of red stone buildings in this part of Germany derive their origin. The workmen split large layers of the stone from the rock, and roll them down the perpendicular height to the valley, where they are cut into smaller masses, and transported by the Neckar and the Rhine throughout the country.

Pursuing the road along the left bank through scenes shifting between the varieties of smiling and reposing nature, and her grander and more rugged features, Heidelberg, the climax of this scene of beauty, was before us, at the close of a clear autumnal evening. It was precisely the suitable moment; for no inhabitant or picturesque describer of the place omits expatiating on the peculiar charms which the setting sun confers on its scenes. Heidelberg stands at the very mouth of the fine Neckar valley, where the parallel chains of mountains abruptly terminate in the sandy level of the Rhine country. These flats

before us were now gradually filling with the evening mists, which were hovering about the town, the noble mountains, and the hollow windows, walls and buttresses of the rambling castle, which, as it were, hangs on the irregular heights above the town. The deep red of the autumnal sun was contending with the fast descending darkness, which gave a black colouring to the towers and steeples of the town and the long stone bridge bestriding the burnished river. The scene was involved in an autumnal atmosphere of mist, twilight, and deep ruddy hues, quite as striking in its way as the sultry brilliance of a July evening. It was the difference between Salvator Rosa and Claude. We entered the town by the red massive *Karls-Thor*, (Charles's Gate,) a splendid work of the Elector Charles Theodore, and drove through the narrow gloomy streets (for Heidelberg boasts none but natural beauties) to the Hotel of the *Badischer Hof*, (Court of Baden,) where we supped in a showy saloon, adorned by *soi disants* representations of English hunting, in which a collection of ladies and gentlemen,

any thing but English, in spite of red coats and riding habits, were galloping about wild valleys, and snow-covered mountains, such as would not a little perplex a Leicestershire fox-hunter.

LETTER XXI.

NOTHING can be imagined more striking than the contrast between an English and a German University. In the former, the Gothic buildings, the magnificent colleges, the noble libraries, the chapels, the retired walks, the scholastic grace of the costume, are all so many interesting indications of the antiquity, the munificence, and the dignity of the institution. The University of Heidelberg is one of the most distinguished in Germany—but the constitution of a German University has necessarily no monument of architecture, no appendage of dignity, scarcely any decent building connected with it. The *Universität Gebaüde*, or public building, containing the library and the lecture rooms of the Professors, barely comes under this last description. An Englishman might pass the town a dozen times without remarking any traces of its

institutions, unless he happened to encounter a string of swaggering mustachioed youths, their hair flowing on their shoulders, without cravats, with pipes in their mouths, parading the streets with a rude impudence. These are the students—who resemble each other in all the Universities, in main points, both of costume and character. It is hardly necessary to say this is not an academical costume. A German Student would disdain — as a pert young gentleman of this number told me— to wear a dress not of his own free choice; and his choice, under the influence of a luminous patriotism, takes the direction of reviving the *alt Deutsche kleidung*, or the old costume of the worthy Germans three centuries ago. "*They* were sturdy patriots and right good Germans, and stuck up for our liberties against the Emperor Charles and the princes. *We* want some of this spirit in our days — therefore we will begin by copying them in their dress, and thus we shall introduce it." This is the reasoning of the independent philosophers from fourteen to five and twenty, who attend lectures, if they please, when they please,

and on what they please, in the Professors' rooms at the Universities.

The Universities are, with slight variations, constructed upon the same plan. They are not, as in England, composed of Colleges where the students are obliged to reside, forming large households under the controul of a Head; and submitting to wholesome regulations, both as to conduct and study. A German University is little more than a place where there is a good library and a collection of Professors who read lectures to those who choose to attend them. They afford bare opportunities for study — with few facilities, no compulsion, no discipline, no subordination. The Professor reads his lecture, the student pays him for it — If he attends it, which he does or not as he likes, he walks off at the conclusion as independent of the Professor as a man of his drawing-master at the end of the hour's lesson. There are, besides, private tutors who can be engaged for assistance, at leisure hours.

At Heidelberg, the University is divided into four faculties — Divinity, Jurisprudence,

Medicine, and Philosophy. Each department has several Professors, and a Pro-Rector, chosen annually among them, is the actual head of the University. The Grand Duke of Baden, in whose territory Heidelberg is comprised, is the nominal head under the title of Rector. There are a smaller and greater Senate chosen from the Professors, the former of which meets every fourteen days for transacting the business of the University — and four *Ephori*, who are said to superintend the industry and morals of the students, to correspond with their parents, &c. But these last have an office of little efficacy. Their admonition is without authority; for, short of the power of the police in criminal offences, the students are subject to no power whatever of punishment or controul. They can, consequently, neglect all study and push their excesses to the verge of a breach of the law in defiance of Rector, Ephori, and Professors. Offences which overstep this bound are liable to punishment by the University Police; for the University is not subject to the ordinary police of the country — a University *Amtmann* (Bailiff) and

Beadles, supplying the place to the University of the ordinary provincial Bailiff and *Gens d'arme.* The consequence is, the broken windows, riots, and disturbances, with which the students annoy the citizens, are visited very lightly by the University Magistrates, who often observe them with a secret satisfaction as symptoms of a spirit of independence which they hope may be one day turned to better purposes. With such licence it is not to be wondered that the students find the authorities of the law nearly as much employment as our students give to the gentler advice and correction of the Heads of Houses, Proctors, &c. In some Universities the students are almost as much the terror and nuisance of the neighbourhood, as the worthy associates of Robin Hood or Rob Roy, were to the inhabitants of the scenes of their exploits. In an inn where I slept at Manheim, it was discovered, one morning, that one of these young gentlemen had decamped by his bed-room window, taking with him the sheets of his bed. At Heidelberg, where there are many of noble and respectable families, they are rather better

behaved than usual — and a lady, of the town, told me she found them "tolerably quiet considering."

The students live in lodgings, at the houses of the shopkeepers in the town; a system which if their superiors possessed any controul over their conduct would almost entirely frustrate it. They dine at the Tables d'Hôte of the Inns, to which they are good customers.—I dined with an acquaintance of their number, at a table filled with them. Their manners were, in general, as coarse and as rude as their appearance; they had all the air of low mechanics or persons much less civilized. Some of them were young nobles — others had the ribbons of orders in their button-holes; and they often wear the cockade of their country in their caps or hats, which is sometimes the symbol of a provincial patriotism, much of a-kin to the national one indicated by their clothes. Since the flame of national feeling has been kindled by late events, the distinctions of country are however *professedly* abandoned. The separate associations of the students from different states are done away; and they now

loudly assert that they form but one body of *Germans*. But it is easier to assume the title than to suppress national prejudices or neutralize distinctions of character. The light subtle Prussian is little formed to harmonise with the fat phlegmatic Bavarian or Austrian; and if the students of different states mix in amusements pretty indiscriminately, a quarrel (an event of the commonest occurrence) draws out their provincial prepossessions, and ranges the parties accordingly.

The number of students at Heidelberg, for the last spring *semestre*, or course of lectures, was above 400—Goettingen sometimes musters 1200. The Professors at Heidelberg are now in high repute; and on their attraction depends the fullness of the University.—When a favourite professor departs, sometimes nearly half a University follow him. The students generally enter very young—many at sixteen or seventeen; for as every young man, intended for the civil service of any prince, must spend two years, by way of qualification, at a University, the object of parents is to qualify them for office as early as possible. Raw

children from the Gymnasium are consequently sent to the University, rather to get over these two years than for the purpose of study. Finding themselves here, all at once, their own masters, and exposed to every temptation, they naturally follow the stream, assuming the vices and caricaturing the consequence of full-grown men. The necessary two years are often spent in drinking, gaming, rioting, and insulting others, more from the intoxication of liberty than from vicious inclination. The pride of premature manhood makes them jealous of their little dignities, and ape the punctilios of false honour. Perpetual duels are the consequence, which have all the ill effect of brutalising the feelings without the questionable advantage of exercising courage—for their execution is, in general, ludicrously devoided of danger. The breasts, and faces of the doughty combatants are cased in pasteboard, in the security of which panoply, they chivalrously engage with small rapiers till incensed honour is satisfied, sometimes by the first sprinkling of blood, at others, by nothing less than a wound of a certain length and depth, to be

ascertained by measurement of the seconds. New comers are beset, on their matriculation, with incitements to quarrel, till they put their valour beyond dispute, in one of these combats. Sometimes bodies of disputants (often of different countries) settle their differences by a combat *en masse*. These fights generally terminate in slight wounds — but more fatal consequences are by no means unfrequent. In spite, however, of constant disturbances, and now and then a death occasioned by them, they are still freely permitted, like all other excesses, from the fear of checking the exuberant fervour of youth.

All titles and distinctions of rank are dropped among the students for the common appellation of *Bursch* (Fellow); and when on giving some particulars of our universities to a student, I mentioned the distinction of costume, &c. given to noblemen, this spark of liberty exclaimed—"that would not be suffered among us—we are all equal—we have no distinctions." I could not help smiling when I reflected that after his two years swing of lawlessness and equality this young man was destined for a

pastor's cure or some petty office under a despotic government, where he would find himself pinned down in the third rate circles, and encompassed by the barriers of rank on all sides.

Theatres are wisely prohibited at Heidelberg, and I believe generally in the German Universities; they would merely be rallying-places for the riotous dispositions of the students, which they often indulge freely when they meet at the theatres of other towns. Troops are now removed to avoid broils between them and the students, which were sometimes attended with serious consequences.

The spirit of patriotism and political follies of the students are the natural consequence of the same unbounded licence which often corrupts their morals. Most of them have been inoculated with this spirit by the patriotic games and songs of the gymnasium, where they already ape the dress and manners of the university. Or if they come fresh from their father's abode in the Residence, the transfer from a scene of cringing servility to power, to one of boundless independence, is equally likely to intoxicate young

heads. Finding themselves here distinguished by large privileges from their fellow-citizens in a despotic state, they become insolent, and set about reforming their country with well meant but childish extravagance. The professors seldom check, and often partake the spirit though not all the follies of the students. In spite of their academical privileges the professors have a sense of belonging to the excluded classes: they are not received at court or in the circles of the noblesse — where the few who can appreciate talents would deem their presence a decided acquisition. It is a mistake to suppose that learned men despise these little distinctions — they often feel them more cuttingly than others; and the professors of Germany have the character of being at once discontented and haughty. Two of those of Heidelberg were sometime since arrested by the Grand Duke of Baden, for their bold language on the subject of the restoration of the States: but the students demanded their liberation so vehemently that the Grand Duke who is a weak man did not long detain them.

The proceedings at the Wartburg in

Saxony, of which you have perhaps read accounts in the journals, carried the academical patriotism into some more ambitious follies than usual. Six hundred students met, headed by several professors, at the invitation of the university of Jena. The meeting was to answer the threefold purpose of commemoration of the battle of Leipsic, and of the Reformation, and as a sort of congress or deliberative conference among the plenipotentiaries of the different universities. The youthful delegates were to frame general regulations for the universities, to legislate on duelling, and to establish a students' gazette for extending their principles and asserting their rights. They drank the health of the Grand Duke of Weimar, as the only German Prince worthy of reigning, and made a solemn *auto da fe* of the favourite military pig-tail of the Elector of Hesse Cassel, the pad which stuffs the breast of a Prussian soldier, and the corporal's cane much in use in the Austrian ranks. The flames were enlivened by some foreign manufactures, and some obnoxious works of Kotzebue, Ancillon, Dabelow, Schmaltz, &c. obsequious men

who had opposed the Tugenbund and other patriotic societies, and had shown themselves not undeserving the contempt of independent Germans.

The students had well chosen the scene of their solemnities; for any where but in the duchy of Weimar, the police would have unquestionably been principal actors in the drama. The Grand Duke after investigation, in which it appeared that the professors were not concerned in the riotous part of the proceedings, probably did wisely to let it drop. As a political affray it was rather calculated to give hints to princes than to inspire them with immediate fears; and jejune and ill-chosen as the means used by the young politicians of expressing their sentiments may be considered, every one admits that they objected to nothing but what was highly objectionable, and did nothing but what was well intended, and what might reasonably be expected from the systems of the Universities. Looking at these systems in a political point of view, a wisher of constitutional freedom to Germany could perhaps hardly desire to see liberty extinguished or

curtailed in the few isolated spots in which it flourishes in the nation. The extraordinary privileges which intoxicate young heads might, indeed, be diffused to advantage among the more sober part of the community: but in the mean time it is impossible to blame the Germans for being jealously tenacious of them where they exist. The plant of freedom is too scarce in the country not to deserve fostering and protection, even though the prurient soil where it blooms may sometimes make it run to seed, and expend its vigour in fruitless exuberances. Preserve the seed, and it may disseminate into more congenial soils. But, viewed with reference to the talents and the morals of the rising generation, I fear the unbounded licence of the University can only produce unqualified mischief. Two years in the most precious and susceptible period of life spent in a chaos of coarse riot and disorder must necessarily often unhinge the principles, corrupt the morals, and harden the feelings. Even the independent spirit which it is thought to impart is often too *outré* and extravagant to be stable;

and, as extremes always meet, this spirit not unfrequently slides into the basest servility when transplanted into the atmosphere of a despotic Court.

Be the advantages or disadvantages of the system, however, what they may, any reform is, on several accounts, very improbable. The Princes are too fond of the celebrity and the profit which flourishing Universities bring to their little States not to be afraid of interfering with their regulations. If the interest of the Princes had not been on their side, you may easily conceive the Universities would never have escaped unhurt in the late general wreck of constitutions and popular rights. Any reform which curtailed the licence of the students would, in fact, instantly raise a cry of violation of the old privileges of the Universities. Half the students (except those who are obliged to pass two years at the University of their own State) would instantly desert, and flock to the University of the neighbouring State, where licence still flourished. The little rival Sovereign would rejoice at the opportunity of aggrandising his own semi-

naries at the expence of those of his neighbour, and would consequently refrain from following the example of reform. In this as in other matters the clashings of interest among the princes prevent any movement that has for object the general good.

No place can be more delightfully situated as a retreat of study and science than Heidelberg, enclosed as it is between picturesque ranges of mountains; the majestic and placid Neckar in the valley; the castle ruins on the declivities above the town which are covered with the luxuriant hanging gardens of the castle, whose terraces, thickets, and umbrageous walks afford solemn and silent retreats for study, and prospects over the Rhine and the Neckar valley of the most ravishing and varied beauty. The castle is an immense mass of rambling ruins, of architecture of different centuries and descriptions, whose mouldering remains rear their ragged masses with a most striking effect, overhanging the Neckar, and embosomed in the wild shrubberies and woods which cover the slope of the mountain. The town is old, dark, and irregular, and presents few traces of the consequence it enjoyed till the early

part of the last century as the residence of the splendid court of the Electors Palatine. A few families of more consequence than wealth still reside here, some of whom we had the pleasure of meeting at the house of the hospitable Count ——.

LETTER XXII.

I know you have an idea of the German women as a race of fair blue-eyed dames: but these beauties, which in the north are predominant, share admiration in the south with hazel eyes, dark hair, and other charms of a soft, not a lively brunette. It is very rare to see a woman with deep black eyes or hair, or any thing sparkling, or strongly marked in her features. The complexion of the southern German women is far from beautiful. In the fairest women it has often a thick sallow sort of tinge, the reverse of that transparent lustre of our countrywomen, which Doctor Donne's beautiful lines suit: —

> "The pure and eloquent blood
> Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought,
> That one might almost say her body thought."

Striking beauty is, in fact, not the *forte* of the fair Germans near the Rhine — but they have often fine eyes, pleasing voices, and a sentimental grace, and tenderness of manner, interesting because quite natural. All the charm of a German woman, peculiar to herself, centres in this. — Her deportment is often stiff and ungain — but her soft voice and kind sympathising manner give her a charm purely her own. — She seems moulded out of nature's softest materials — tenderness and sentiment appear to be her life. Unlike Pope's heroine, whom he would have only "*a softer man*," a German woman is purely and exclusively *a woman*. Her looks, voice, manners, and conduct, place the soft, supple qualities of her sex in a sort of exaggerated contrast with those of ours. She appears more eager to captivate than to shine; to steal softly to the heart, than to take it by storm. It would be a mistake, however, to consider this a symptom of *depth* of sensibility. It is only the expression of that sort of indolent slowness, little excited by cultivation, which finds in sentiment the resource of an unoccupied mind. If this softness were merely one of

the shifting weapons of a coquette, it would be intolerable — its *bonâ fide* sincerity in the German ladies makes it interesting, for a time. But the misfortune too often is, that this is not merely the graceful ornament, but the whole substance of character; it turns out that there is no solid base to support this pretty sentimental superstructure. When it is discovered that the unvarying languor is half want of tact and alacrity, and the perpetual coaxing often the resource of heavy intellect, these qualities lose half their first-sight graces. The poet, who has left us the finest picture of woman, gives her "*lowliness majestic*," and "*obsequious majesty*," — but the German women are too apt to be lowly and obsequious *without* majesty. Their character wants more of the noun-substantive — they have too much suppleness even to be graceful.

But the softest clay most depends upon the moulding; and education and corrupt manners must be charged with all the defects I have observed in the German women. Those of the upper, that is the noble classes, are brought up from the cradle under a sort of upper servant, dig-

nified by the title of governess, and who generally couples with her higher functions those of nursery-maid, housekeeper, and assistant at the toilette of the noble mamma. They learn to waltz — a little music — to speak French enough for use bye and bye at Court — to make gowns, bonnets, and turbans. Their acquaintance with books rarely extends beyond sentimental romances and washy poems — and many a lady of no mean title writes neither French nor her own language with moderate correctness. Sixteen is the important æra when they emerge from this petty sphere to the full enjoyments of the court, to which they have looked forward from infancy. Mamma is often a heavy, uninformed, or still worse, a coquettish and unscrupulous person, who little constrains her favourite speculations on sentiment, intrigue, or dress before her attentive daughters. An old Baroness, with the reputation of *ci-devant* beauty and intrigues, entertained me on my first visit, and in the presence of two fair relations under twenty, with a sufficiently intelligible history of her intimacy with one of my compatriots at a German Court — he

was a handsome man — she had not seen him for many years — but she had his portrait — and for some time she was in regular correspondence with him. This was related with an unconscious *sangfroid*, and listened to, gravely, by the young ladies, as to a strain to which they were well accustomed.

The example of almost all around them, their own mothers or some of their mothers dear friends included, helps to finish the weak inflammable character which such an education has too frequently commenced. Sentiment, dress, coquetry, and frivolity reign sometimes by turns, but oftener with a sort of struggle for supremacy more thoroughly intoxicating to the head. The sentimental lady is nearly as fond of her toilette, as her lover; and the coquette who borrows the airs of sentiment is entrapped by her own weapons and falls partly from soft-heartedness, and partly to secure a conquest. The German women have in fact *too much* feeling to play the coquette with entire security — and *not enough* to resist playing it at all.

The education of the women of the

Bourgeoisie is much the same as that of the noble dames, with the exception of rarely speaking or understanding French. Sometimes they are sent to boarding schools — an advantage which their rivals rarely enjoy, because the above-mentioned compound of *gouvernante*, lady's maid, and housekeeper proves a useful personage to a gay mother. The fair *Bourgeoises* have also the advantage of some rational, housekeeping occupations, which employ time and attention. With the assistance of one slave of a servant, they perform all the culinary and other business of the *menage* — and the fair hands which join with the Court beaux once a fortnight at the Casino ball, would be found in a true Griselda condition if their partners called the next morning to make inquiries. Domestic *deshabille* is not however entirely peculiar to the Bourgeoisie. On paying a visit of form one morning to a dignified Count, the Grand master of a small Court, I found his residence on a second floor in a bye street. A scullion hot from the kitchen showed me into a comfortless parlour, where the

Countess in the absence of her spouse met me in a half adjusted coloured gown, a half naked child squalling in her arms, and two or three more hanging about her, dirty and munching. To have seen the Count bowing in full costume at court you would have thought he could not breathe out of the tapestry walls of a palace.

This sort of anti-romantic drudgery, and their exclusion from court gaieties leave the city ladies open to fewer temptations than the Noblesse. The men too are toiling in the public offices at the Chancellery all the morning; and in the evening instead of the intriguing tea drinkings of the nobles a savoury supper must be prepared by their wives and daughters, the latter of whom often wait at table during the meal, and then take their seats with the company, or enliven them with a little music on the piano, such as would do credit to our most accomplished young ladies. Still, however, many moments remain to the young damsels for romance reading, picking up at third hand and detailing court gossip, watching and imitating the *beau monde*, and rivalling in finery their

fellow imitators. Their weak heads too are often turned by the unprincipled attentions of the young nobles, who dance with them at the balls and amuse themselves with their affections, by way of change to the elegant insipidity of the court ladies. When danger falls in their way they have not always more strength to oppose to it than others, but keep them out of harm's way, and they are kind wives and daughters, who mix up sentiment and drudgery with tolerable harmlessness.

If the obligations of marriage (which, from the idleness and poverty of the nobles, is frequently a purely mercenary engagement) had more influence than they can have in such a state of morals, the facility of obtaining divorces affords an easy means of gratifying inclination without offence to conscience. In the Protestant States mere alleged incompatibility of disposition is a sufficient ground for procuring them; and the Catholics remedy the strict prohibition of their religion, as to all points except marrying again, by an arrangement called, a *separation de corps et de bien.*

The history of the complex sentimental arrangements of a well-known Prime Minis-

ter of one of the greatest German powers and his second spouse, is an illustration of all that is bad in German systems of matrimony and morals. His Excellency and this lady met at Hanover, both being then married and parents of families. A vehement and mutual passion was the consequence, of course speedily followed by a divorce of both parties and their marriage. Their attachment survived the union for some little time, when each party began to find their active hearts in want of new occupation. The Minister had been smitten at Frankfort, by a fascinating actress whom he engaged to follow him; while his lady consoled herself by taking lessons on the flageolet of a captivating musician of a regimental band. His wife's musical pursuits becoming such as to compromise the Prince's dignity, he had recourse to a second divorce; and thus left at liberty he has lately married the actress, who lived with him as his mistress above fifteen years, and who is now received and recognized as the Princess of ———. His spouse declared without shame the musician the father of one of her children, and did all in her power

to engage the man to leave for her his own wife and family. He appears however to have possessed more principle than either the Prince or his wife, and firmly refused. Marriage is thus too often made a farce of unmeaning forms—an empty name to sanction vice—and to console people with the idea that while they are indulging licentious inclinations, they are transgressing no moral law and consulting decorum in their conduct.

In cases of divorce the children are frequently divided, according to their sexes—the husband taking charge of the sons and the wife of the daughters. The common stock of property is shared, by each party taking their own — a regulation which has sometimes the effect of keeping together a restless pair who would otherwise unhesitatingly break their chains. A gallant officer of my acquaintance left behind him a pretty wife on following the army in the Spanish campaign. — On returning, after two years absence, he found himself in possession of an increase of family, for which he had to thank a young student from the University. A divorce would have been the immediate remedy, but that his wife had brought him

a considerable fortune of which he would thus have lost the enjoyment. He therefore put a gay face on the matter, and consoled himself by the philosophical reflection —*Eh bien si ma femme a eu un enfan, moi j'en ai eu deux.* This instance is in the class of the Bourgeoisie. When I knew the lady, she was just ennobled and shining at Court with her easy spouse.

The perfect phlegm and indifference with which these arrangements are treated, and with which the parties concerned live together in society afterwards, are natural consequences of their frequency, and prove that the "Double Arrangement" of the Anti-Jacobin wits is hardly a poetical exaggeration. A friend of mine received a note from a lady of her acquaintance inviting herself to pass the evening — but happening to expect, amongst others, the two former divorced husbands of the lady, out of regard for her feelings, she requested her to delay her visit. The hardy lady, however, immediately answered, that she suspected the cause of the excuse, that she was much obliged by my friend's considerateness, but it being quite unnecessary she

begged permission to be of the party. She accordingly came, bringing her present husband to make up a friendly trio with her two former ones; and all parties spent the evening most sociably and happily. This extraordinary apathy will be, in some degree, accountable, when you reflect that these husbands were, in fact, to this lady nothing more than two discarded lovers; for marriage is thus literally a connection as transitory as light, and in no respect more sacred or solemn. It is highly possible indeed that this easy fair one would not have encountered lovers to whom she had not been united by decorous forms with so unconscious a coolness. But here she had no occasion for reproaches of conscience — she had acted in compliance with the received regulations of society — and merely availed herself of the privilege they give of shifting husbands as easily as dresses or residences.

No one can live in German society without being struck by the little consequence which the women appear to possess in it. This is, perhaps, at once the cause and consequence of the soft humility of manners which distinguishes them. From

the peasant's wife who drudges in the fields and farm yard, without shoes or stockings, to the noble ladies who are treated with a cool unceremoniousness by the beaux in the saloons, they have all the air of submissive slavery. This will always be more or less the case in society where the women often want

"The awe
About her as a guard angelic placed,"

with which virtue alone can invest them. But the respect which they thus lose is supplied by few of the little attentions of gallantry. The women are neither treated with the respect due to virtuous matrons, nor the incense paid to mistresses. The ceremony of standing hat in hand till the lady you are talking to tells you to be covered, and others of a similar description, are old-fashioned formalities which mean nothing; but they enjoy none of those flattering attentions — those little sacrifices to comfort — which proceed from gallantry of feeling. In society the men talk in clusters, sometimes for a whole evening; not, as is in England, from an

indolent *mauvaise honte*, which admits, in the most striking way, the respect inspired by the females, but with an air of indifferent superiority which disdains to submit to a *gene* for those whom it does not respect. Loose, and frequently gross conversations, and oaths, are indulged in their presence, which they often suffer in silence, for want of dignity and influence to check them. The want of gallantry goes the length of not entirely exempting the women from humble observances of rank in the other sex. I have seen a party of ladies uneasy, and hardly venturing to keep their seats, because a young Prince was on his legs in the circle; and a fair friend of mine, educated in a different school, was considered rude, because she declined requesting a presentation to the young junior sons of royalty, to whom the German ladies thought it necessary to volunteer their formal obeisances. You will admit this is the height of anti-chivalrous spirit.

The men are naturally losers in the grace of their own manners for their neglect of feminine influence. The rude manners, and savage Hussar habits which

you still sometimes find in the best society have, in more civilised countries, vanished before the mild influence of the ladies: but in Germany they are not likely to be for some time in condition to banish sordid habits of debauchery, or to laugh tobacco and mustachios out of countenance. The fair ladies lament these habits; and at Vienna they are beginning not to dance quite so readily with a partner who smokes: but in the smaller circles it is sometimes the sentimental occupation of the noble belle to furnish her lover with an elegant embroidered bag for the tobacco, fungus, and flint, with which his pocket must be stored.

Do not suppose, however, that I have not met with many exceptions to the character of uninformed and unstable sentiment which is too often to be found in the German women. The same soft tempers, the same kindness of heart, which are now too often their ruin, in other instances produce models of domestic tenderness and pure affection. The German women are *all but* delightful domestic creatures. One laments that society has so much abused

their qualities. In an improved state of morals they will be more than most women capable of solacing and sweetening private life. The fleeting triumphs of wit and the graces will always be monopolised by the more lively beauties of the south: but the fair Germans need by no means envy them; formed as they are by nature — it would be well if equally so by education and habit— for the quiet of the heart's affections, and the lap of domestic happiness.

LETTER XXIII.

MANHEIM, the *ci-devant* capital of the Electors Palatine, those showy pillars in the old political fabric of Germany, is now a provincial town in the modern Grand Duchy of Baden—like Mayence, Worms, and other places in the neighbourhood, a striking remnant of ancient splendour humbled beneath a little military sovereign of yesterday. Mayence and Worms are, however, filled with Catholic dirt and decay — one has little regret at their desertion — but Manheim is still a modern elegant little city, bespeaking, in its regular streets and squares, its palace, walks, and gardens, the taste and dignity of its former princes. It does not, however, possess any monuments of architecture that stand out very strikingly from the rest. The Jesuits Church, with its slated dome and belfries, and its rich fresco paintings in

the interior, is handsome and tasteful.—The *Kaufhaus*, or Building of Commerce, in the central square, with colonades filled with shops, rears its tall quaint steeple above the other buildings; but its uniform respectability and neatness, unmixed with meanness or decay, gives to the town that air of compact genteel superiority which has acquired for it the name of Berlin in miniature. A handsome wide public walk, through double avenues of acacias, called the Planken, runs across the town, forming a gay promenade chained in from the carriage way on each side. Baden officers, in blue uniforms and stuffed out breasts, *à la Prussienne*, and the young belles of the town with their plaited hair without bonnets (a common *coeffure*, even in cold weather) were parading under the trees. A police, renowned for activity, strictly keep out of sight all nuisances that might sully the decorous gentility of the town.

The spacious red stone palace of the Electors flanks the town, next the Rhine. This once splendid edifice, which stretches its wings and quadrangles over ground enough to hold half a dozen royal palaces

of Stutgard or Carlsruhe, now looks forlorn under royal neglect. The great clock stands still — the gilded pannels and other symptoms of interior magnificence peep through a mean casement — and the drying shirts of the Baden soldiers hang out of the windows of one wing degraded to a caserne. The wide gravel terrace, under the windows of the palace, is the favourite Sunday promenade of the beaux and belles of Manheim; but the weeds that sprout up in spite of them, the unpruned luxuriance of the shrubberies and lawns, denote the absence of the court gardener. The Rhine flows at the bottom of the gardens, which are protected from this formidable neighbour by a substantial mound planted with shrubs. — On the top runs a fine terrace, commanding the majestic stream as it glides through a bridge of boats, the little cluster of barges, and the scanty bustle of the quay; while behind, the expanse of shrubbery is crowned by the desolate looking *corps de logis* and wings of the palace, once the scene of gay imitations of the splendours of Versailles.

The munificent Charles Theodore, the last Elector Palatine, was the *Louis Quatorze* of the Palatinate — the costly decorator and oppressor of his country. His cypher recals his memory on most of the handsome buildings, and every child is familiar with the name of *Karl Theodor*, who built the right wing of the palace, and erected the noble portals, whose stud drank out of marble troughs, now profaned by the Baden troop-horses — whose German and Italian Opera, and French Theatre, were the admiration of the *cognoscenti* of Germany.

One Theatre still survives, and supports some of the reputation which it acquired as the nursery of Iffland, and a school of great tragedians, to whom Germany looks back as we do to our Garrick, Cooke, and Kemble. I saw a new piece performed on these classic boards, in which the practical jokes, the gorgeous scenery, and a troop of cantering Hussars, headed by a graceful heroine, seemed to denote that modern German managers cater for the public something like our own; but, on admiring the military evolutions, I found they had gone a step farther, and, that no

one might accuse their biped and quadruped performers of want of *nature*, the dramatic troop was neither more nor less than a file of the Baden Light Dragoons from the garrison in the town. Though the theatre is still celebrated and much frequented, it declines, like every thing here, for want of patronage. A German Theatre never supports itself by its prices of admittance, which generally vary from about twelve *kreutzers* (about four-pence halfpenny) for the gallery, to a florin and a half (three shillings) for the boxes. The Grand Duke of Baden allows the Theatre at Manheim 25,000 florins a-year: but the townsmen complain that this is a poor recompence for the favoured rivalry of his Court Theatre at Carlsruhe, to which every successful actor is invited, professedly to amuse the Court only for a few nights, but, if he pleases the Court, he is never permitted to return. This is a slight instance of the spirit of petty despotism which generally extends itself to the pleasures as well as the rights of its subjects.

The monopoly of all consequence by the Prince and the Palace, among the dependants of the little Residence is

sometimes exemplified in the most laughable trifles. — For instance, all the clocks in the duodecimo capitals are naturally regulated by the Palace clock, which, invested with the privilege of its reigning master, never can go wrong. The great clocks at the Palace of course go by the little clock in His Royal Highness's cabinet; and this going according to His Royal Highness's whim, the hour of the day throughout the State is dictated by the Prince instead of the sun. One sovereign, whom I have the honour of knowing, makes very free with this empire over time; and just as it happens that he wishes to cut short a tiresome audience, or to have a favourite piece of music twice repeated at a rehearsal or a concert, the town clocks and the chimes of the Palace are sure to be at odds — half the dinners of the metropolis are spoilt — grave appointments broken — while few but the Prince and his valet de chambre are in the secret.

The people of Manheim, proud of their ancient consequence, do not regard very complacently their desolate buildings, and dreary walks, the rude reign of troops,

whom they do not yet regard as countrymen, and the other marks of their humiliating incorporation with a little State. Many of the nobles cling to the dreary dignity of the old residence instead of mixing freely in the gaieties of the capital of their new Sovereign. At Carlsruhe they are accused of sulky *hauteur*, and the Manheimites in revenge turn up their noses at the narrow ideas and petty spirit of their rivals. These lively jealousies extend to all classes, and are aggravated by continual little preferences and favours shown by the Grand Duke to his capital and residence; so that you rarely hear a good word of Carlsruhe at Manheim, or of Manheim at Carlsruhe. The Grand Duke consequently enjoys very little of the affection of his new subjects. The towns-people complain of his thoughtlessness and indifference, and his submission to favourites at Carlsruhe, who extort any privileges by importunity and intrigue. All the little Princes seek to advance the splendour of their residences by immunities to persons who build houses, &c.; but the Grand Duke of Baden goes the arbitrary length of contributing, besides wood, one-third of the

expense, which he of course draws from the public revenue. The taxes are now very heavy, and the inhabitants of Manheim naturally complain that while their own town declines in population, they are thus compelled to contribute to the extension of Carlsruhe.

The commerce of Manheim is quite inconsiderable, and the little that it has suffers severely from the separation of the left bank of the Rhine, which from Worms to Weisenberg, the frontier of France, has been given by the politicians of Vienna, to Bavaria. This patch of territory is totally unconnected with the kingdom it is assigned to. His Bavarian Majesty probably procured it as comprising (though with great additions) his old patrimonial State, the Duchy of Deux Ponts. He now looks with a covetous eye on Manheim, and his old family possessions on the right bank; but the Grand Duke of Baden is little disposed to accommodate him, and continually refuses his offers of money or exchange of territory. His Majesty, consequently, cannot visit his possessions without the permission of passage through Wirtemberg and

Baden, or by a great *detour* through Baden alone.

The Grand Duchy of Baden is divided into circles governed by resident Directors who are noblemen of some consequence. Manheim is the residence of the Director of the Neckar Circle, and also the seat of the Courts of Judicature, of the first and second instance, to one or the other of which, people have access according to their birth.

The laws in use in most of the German States on the other side of the Rhine are modifications of the civil code. The pleadings and process are conducted in writing by Schreibers or Notaries; and the Judges examine the witnesses and pass sentence on criminals in private. The convicts for capital crimes are beheaded. The execution takes place out of the town, and if it is for murder, on the spot where the crime was committed. The sentence is generally read to the criminal in a public place in the town. A pause of a few minutes follows to await the possible arrival of the Prince's pardon; if that does not come, the *bâton* of justice is broken before the prisoner — he is reconducted to prison, and the next morning to

the place of execution, accompanied by a priest of his religion. The effect of religious counsels is often however defeated by the absurd custom of granting the prisoner in his last hours every thing he demands; he consequently often leaves the world in a state of intoxication. The Grand Duke of Hesse for many years persisted in not signing a warrant of execution in compliance with a vow of mistaken clemency made on coming to the throne. His country consequently became "the needy villain's general home" for all the neighbourhood; and he was at last induced to uphold the terrors of justice by two or three salutary examples.

We rode over from Manheim to Schwetzingen, an ancient residence of the Electors Palatine, with a garden considered the most splendid in Germany, and not exceeded by many in Europe. The palace is a desolate building without traces of magnificence. The entry into the gardens, through the archway of the palace, is very striking. The stately alleys of limes, the broad gravel terraces, the parterres, the fountains, and the statues present an array of pompous formality not

without its magnificence. In their peculiar style, which is French and formal, it would be difficult to suggest any improvements on the good taste and splendour of the gardens. Every thing is upon a grand scale. The classical Temples, and the fine marble statues, have nothing trumpery and *mesquin*, but are really such as one might imagine adorning a sequestered grove near the Tiber instead of the Rhine. Even the Pan, playing his syrinx on a dripping rock, at the end of a cool grassy alley is so well executed and placed that an Arcadian dream could not be better embodied. You only want the

> "Satyrs and Sylvan boys were seen,
> Peeping from out their alleys green."

to make it complete. The Temple of Apollo is the most beautiful of the many in the garden. In following one of the walks in the thick wilderness which covers the sides of the garden, and happily conceals its limits, you come to an open grassy space inclosed by thick shrubs. In the middle is a large turf basin adorned with sphinxes, on the other side of which you

are struck by the light, graceful, open temple, on a rocky elevation, with the statue of the god in the middle, and the clear sky and the grove beyond appearing through it. The effect is classical and beautiful. Against the rock, under the temple, two naïads of white Carrara marble recline, pouring from an urn a stream which flows down a cascade of steps into a basin. On each side of the cascade, steps lead up to the temple, the round dome of which is supported by simple Ionic pillars. From the temple you look on all sides into the thick green wilderness. On the last visit of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia to the Grand Duke of Baden, a play was represented on this spot, in the open air—the great basin, now empty, was converted into the pit, with benches for the illustrious guests, and a stage erected in front of the temple. The whole grove was brilliantly illuminated, and the effect was described to me as highly beautiful.

It is unnecessary to describe the many other temples, baths, ruins, fountains, obelisks, &c. which embellish the gardens—One of the most curious is the Turkish

Mosque — an elaborate imitation of an Oriental edifice, the tall minarets of which rising above the trees of the garden, form a striking object in the neighbourhood. The mosque stands in an oblong square court, surrounded by a low Arabian colonade. The main building is an eastern temple, crowned by a cupola with a lofty, thin, minaret tower on each wing. Over the entrance, as well as on the portal of the court are inscribed, in German, a variety of wise apothegms from the Koran. The interior is rich in Arabesque ornaments; inscriptions, and further Oriental wise saws, and the *keeping* of the whole structure, on which expence and labour have been lavished, is perfect, as far as one can judge who has never set foot in a Turkish capital. The splendid "Karl Theodor," was the main author of the beauties of Schwetzingen — and the old ragged gardeners, whose huge rusty cocked hats were the only remaining vestige of their *quondam* consequence, recalled his name and his golden days with affectionate regret. Then 66,000 florins were allowed annually for the support of the gardens; not a third

part of that sum is now spent on them. The consequence is, the gaping Tritons look thirsty, the naïads doubly despondingly; and the Apollos, and Bacchuses almost as dirty and yellow as real antiques. The yellow leaves of autumn which were beginning to strew the damp walks conspired to increase the melancholy air which characterises the gardens — Perhaps

> "Another age shall see the golden ear
> Imbrown the slope and nod on the parterre,
> Deep harvests bury all that pride has plann'd,
> And laughing Ceres reassume the land."

It appears difficult to imagine why the Grand Duke of Baden suffers his splendid acquirements, at Manheim and Schwetzingen, which so much surpass any of his hereditary treasures to wither in melancholy decay — while his own little whitewashed capital a "neat snug tenement, and in good repair," is his constant and favourite abode. But may it not be for the same reason that the hero hangs up his captured helmets and cuirasses to rust on the wall instead of turning them to serviceable account by fitting them on his person — or that the pick-

pocket refrains from figuring with the diamond ring, or the seals, the fruits of yesterday's cruise, for fear of being accused of owing his splendour to stolen goods? We took leave of Schwetzingen, admiring its vestiges of stately splendour, and regular pomp — but compared with the *comfortable picturesque* of our English gardens, it rather leaves the impression of Timon's Villa,

"Where all cry out — 'what sums are thrown away!'"

LETTER XXIV.

I CANNOT say that I have found the German Theatre a resource totally devoid of heaviness and *ennui:* but to go three times a week is necessary to avoid being set down for a Goth without taste or feeling. The Theatre at Frankfort is the largest I visited; those of Stutgard and Manheim the handsomest: but a splendid Theatre has little advantage over a homely one, for both are involved in a dreary twilight, which half conceals the living as well as the inanimate ornaments. With the exception of those on the stage, a dim shabby *chandelier* of lamps descending from the roof is the only source of illumination in the house. This is not the result of neglect, but of system. It is said to heighten the contrast, and, by giving an undivided attraction to the brilliant stage, to render illusion more complete. The Germans prefer this advantage to the gay

spectacle of a crowded and glittering audience. But surely it is dull imagination and cold feeling which require the most helps; and the Germans who must sit in the dark in order to admire the light, a good deal resemble children who blow out the candles when they play at snap-dragon, in order to make more downright real witches of the party.

The Opera is generally the main attraction in a German Theatre. At the little Courts an order for a favourite Opera is issued in compliment to a distinguished visitor; and a person who omits attending that on a Sunday evening is considered, by the little fashionable circles, as a being beyond all accounting for. These entertainments sometimes unquestionably afford a high treat. The instrumental music is carried to a high pitch of excellence: the orchestra picked, assorted, trained to perfection by laborious practisings, and led by musicians of profound skill and science. When the Grand Duke of Hesse's admirable band, in their simple uniform, struck up the overture of Tancred, (a modern piece of

great beauty,) on the *jour de Saint Louis*, the effect was like one full instrument of varied power and tone; the sounds came forth with an electrical rapidity—and the grand passages burst from the orchestra as if they would rend the little building. The whole representation, for its exquisite music, the scenery, the costume, the taste and splendour of every accessory, was a delightful little piece of perfection. But the true German connoisseurs, have often a passion for grand compositions,—gorgeous displays of the mechanism of the art — in which one is stunned with the noisy triumphs of the orchestra, and uninteresting masterings of difficulties, only to show how far the professor's skill, and his pupils' accuracy can go. This suits the Germans better than us. They are quite as much, or rather more learned connoisseurs than warm admirers: we are simply the last. If an air is pretty or touching — no matter who composed it, or whether it is easy or difficult, ignorant or scientific — it becomes an *encored* favourite, and is served up in half a dozen

shapes. But a German Theatre is half composed of musicians, whose gratification depends on the difficulty of the music, and the correctness of the execution — to whom it is a pleasure of the ear, rather than of the feelings. I never heard a German audience touched and electrified by a passionate tone, or a melting air: but I have heard half a Theatre shudder with one accord, as if their teeth were set on edge, at the slip of a note in a difficult passage. It is, perhaps, owing to the same difference of their feeling for music that they never *encore* what pleases them. The pleasure of the connoisseur is cold and regulated: that which centres in warm feelings will occasionally overflow with boisterous testimonials not to be restrained. When I asked the reason of this custom, I was told, that to *encore* would derange the orchestra and perplex the singer. It would, in fact, be contrary to that *order* which pervades every thing in Germany — matrimony and the universities ever excepted.

I have been surprised to see the classical pieces of Schiller, Goëthe, and Lessing, so rarelyon the stage. In the north, where

literature is more cultivated, I understand they are oftener represented: but the complaint in Germany is the same as in England — the old veterans are driven off by sparkling modern melo-dramatists. Iffland, who died recently, was the last celebrated tragedian; and he has left no worthy successor. Spectacles and irregular pieces, are growing the favourite food of the public; and you see how deep they have gone in the system of extraordinary stimulants to curiosity from the equestrian piece at Manheim. The sentimental dramas of that sort which faithful translators, and scarcely less faithful wags, have introduced to our notice in England, form the staple ware on the intermediate nights of the Opera. Kotzebue's is considered, I believe, the best manufacture. The comic pieces are broad and noisy, often without wit or vivacity — Some of Kotzebue's, however, are full of real humour and amusing caricature.

The German language appears to me by no means well calculated for fine declamation. If the French is monotonous it has at least a smartness and a grace which give a sort of refined stiffness to its declamation. But the

German is at once monotonous and vulgar; its elevation is a painful effort; there is no nobleness in its passion; its force is rough, coarse, and unmanageable. The gamut of sounds is scanty, and seems to contain nothing but *flats*; and in the mouths of the best actors in heroic parts I have never heard the poet's lines divested of a muddy murmuring harshness, from which the actor appeared to be heaving himself as if by an intestine steam engine into a region of pomp, which he could not attain. When the actor is earnest, instead of the clear racy result, you hear all the *machinery* of enunciation — the rumbling guttural efforts at emphasis, which remind one of the rattle of a mill wheel rather than the sound of a fine instrument. There is in fact a *prosaic meanness* in the sound of the language. It seems mainly adapted to matter-of-fact purposes; and the only approach to any thing like a poetical grace which I have been struck with in it, is the sort of comfortable though homely softness which it acquires in the mouths of the women of all orders. It is the voice of hu-

mility and kind goodness themselves. A strapping peasant's wife, without shoes or stockings, and with the strength of a horse, salutes you as she passes with a *guten abend* (good evening,) with the softness of a pastoral heroine. But when raised above the level of conversation, the language becomes turgid and the want of clear strength and dignity is remedied by a laborious inflation of manner. The inverted construction gives also a monotony to the accents, which fall with a *bump* on every verb or participle, which clenches the straggling meaning and gives the declaimer a *rebound*, to send him forward to the next *point d'appui*. This gives one the disagreeable idea of weakness thrust above its level and only to be kept up by staggering struggles. It is like a shuttlecock which does not fly, but is kept in the air by repeated blows.

The character of a language forms the style of acting — and that of a German actor appears to me without the even dignity or the chaste energy which are the perfection of heroic delineation. There is as good an understanding between the author

and the actor as if they had drunk their bottle together before the play. The wild fantastic style of the one is depicted in the inveterate heavings, foamings, and rantings; the extravagant gestures and abrupt contrasts of the other. There is equally little selection in the means used by both. Tremendous, terrible, effect, no matter how extravagantly produced, is their object. Their pictures of passion are daubs fit for sign posts. The German actor makes every passion invariably either grim, grinning, and inveterate or languid, puling, and awkwardly sweet. He is generally much more terrible than nature, as the showman's painted monster over the door is ordinarily a more formidable being than its prototype in the cage within. Ranting, lungs-cracking-ranting, is of course one means of this storming of the sensibilities; and the actors whom I have sometimes heard at the little courts seem to be actuated by the ambition of *Bottom*, "I will roar that I will make the *Duke* say — let him roar again, let him roar again." But the straight-forward rant is too simple a means to answer the ambitious ends of the German actor. He is obliged to resort to

broad contrast, sudden relaxations, abrupt declensions, and all the antitheses of manner. The triumph however of expression which generally gives the *coup de grace* to all other efforts, is the irony of choking and grinning passion, represented with a hideous force that makes some persons shiver and others laugh — so nearly do extremes approach. The actor rarely gives passion free vent — he prefers letting it curdle. He seldom housewifes his powers — but strains them without reason till they sink under him, sure of being truly German and impressive in a final concentration of savage impotence, which rarely escapes being ludicrous.

When Kemble represented the Stranger with a scholastic grace and a desolate dignity, nothing could be more sublime — more unlike a German actor. Kotzebue would not have known his hero again, and a German audience would, I am inclined to think, have found the misanthrope insupportably tame and rational. His dignity would have gone for nothing — his grace would have been weakness — they would only have been considered to neutralize that sheer down-

right force with which it is necessary to strike the blow in order to cicatrize obtuse German sensibilities.

The behaviour and manners of a German audience are not calculated to enliven the general gloomy character of the house. — An unruffled stillness pervades all quarters — no one seems above half occupied, and not quite sure whether they are amused. — The applauses are feeble and rare — and I never witnessed the indecorum of a hiss. Madame de Stael mentions that they reserved their applauses expressly for the end (I have not generally observed this) — and that Schroder, a great actor, thought this silence the greatest compliment that could be paid him. The compliment appears to me very equivocal, and quite as likely to result from cold appreciation as from the eagerness of attentive admiration.

The theatre, which forms part of the household of a little court, is naturally the scene of a decorum doubly grave and impenetrable. The royal box and the guards jointly keep strict order. The pit and boxes are obliged to suspend their admiration, in order not to anticipate the

signal of applause from the Royal Critics. "That would hang every mother's son of them." The flirting belles of the court, in the side boxes, steal glances at the royal party to take care that their violations of silence may not attract a royal look; and all the *beau monde* observe with an anxious attention the exits and entries of the illustrious party, between the acts, not to omit rising each time, and a profound obeisance when they finally retire. In case the spirit of courtiership should not be equally potent among the less elevated part of the audience, they are taught the duties of silence and respect in a style better adapted to their capacities — by tall grenadiers, with fixed bayonets, stationed in all parts of the house. The only movement at all resembling a burst of popular expression which I witnessed in Germany, was on the Grand Duke of Hesse's entry to the theatre on St. Louis's Day. The house rose and welcomed him with a pretty cordial clapping, for nearly a minute, which moderate as it was would have possessed more value if nine-tenths of those from whom it proceeded had not been de-

pendent, almost for their bread, on his Royal Highness's pleasure. I could not help contrasting these tame applauses with the shouts of hearty good-will which greet an English Prince or Hero, from individuals as independent of him as he of them.

I will conclude this epistle with an account of a traveller's *rencontre*, not unconnected with the subject of the drama.

Chance gave me an opportunity of procuring, for a party of German friends, the gratification of some English recitations by one of the first ornaments of our stage whom I accidentally fell in with on his travels. The Hereditary Princess of Hesse who would have enjoyed the opportunity was unfortunately absent, and the Grand Duchess, who had no small curiosity to see a man with whose name she was familiar, was prevented by some court etiquettes which in Germany are insurmountable. The hero of our scene was, however, received with a flattering cordiality by a large circle of the noblesse; amongst whom, his knowledge of French and German soon placed him at ease. Several individuals, hav-

ing some knowledge of the language, he good-naturedly complied with a general wish to witness some specimens of his talents. We selected a scene from Shylock, the soliloquy in Hamlet, and the scene between Hamlet and his mother; the two last of which were familiar to some in English, and to many in the German translation. The gratification was novel to the whole party; and their astonishment and admiration surpassed my expectations. Those whose knowledge of the language enabled them to follow the reciter, were charmed with the vigour and melody of his voice, the beauty of his enunciation, and the variation and justness of his emphasis; while all admired his changing expression of face, his noble figure, and the graceful ease of the little action with which he embellished his delivery. The scene in the closet, from Hamlet, produced particular effect. The actor grew warmer as he proceeded with the pathetic dialogue between Hamlet and his mother — the tears came into his eyes — his voice faultered out the reproaches of Hamlet — he gave

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signal of applause from the Royal Critics. "That would hang every mother's son of them." The flirting belles of the court, in the side boxes, steal glances at the royal party to take care that their violations of silence may not attract a royal look; and all the *beau monde* observe with an anxious attention the exits and entries of the illustrious party, between the acts, not to omit rising each time, and a profound obeisance when they finally retire. In case the spirit of courtiership should not be equally potent among the less elevated part of the audience, they are taught the duties of silence and respect in a style better adapted to their capacities — by tall grenadiers, with fixed bayonets, stationed in all parts of the house. The only movement at all resembling a burst of popular expression which I witnessed in Germany, was on the Grand Duke of Hesse's entry to the theatre on St. Louis's Day. The house rose and welcomed him with a pretty cordial clapping, for nearly a minute, which moderate as it was would have possessed more value if nine-tenths of those from whom it proceeded had not been de-

pendent, almost for their bread, on his Royal Highness's pleasure. I could not help contrasting these tame applauses with the shouts of hearty good-will which greet an English Prince or Hero, from individuals as independent of him as he of them.

I will conclude this epistle with an account of a traveller's *rencontre*, not unconnected with the subject of the drama.

Chance gave me an opportunity of procuring, for a party of German friends, the gratification of some English recitations by one of the first ornaments of our stage whom I accidentally fell in with on his travels. The Hereditary Princess of Hesse who would have enjoyed the opportunity was unfortunately absent, and the Grand Duchess, who had no small curiosity to see a man with whose name she was familiar, was prevented by some court etiquettes which in Germany are insurmountable. The hero of our scene was, however, received with a flattering cordiality by a large circle of the noblesse; amongst whom, his knowledge of French and German soon placed him at ease. Several individuals, hav-

ing some knowledge of the language, he good-naturedly complied with a general wish to witness some specimens of his talents. We selected a scene from Shylock, the soliloquy in Hamlet, and the scene between Hamlet and his mother; the two last of which were familiar to some in English, and to many in the German translation. The gratification was novel to the whole party; and their astonishment and admiration surpassed my expectations. Those whose knowledge of the language enabled them to follow the reciter, were charmed with the vigour and melody of his voice, the beauty of his enunciation, and the variation and justness of his emphasis; while all admired his changing expression of face, his noble figure, and the graceful ease of the little action with which he embellished his delivery. The scene in the closet, from Hamlet, produced particular effect. The actor grew warmer as he proceeded with the pathetic dialogue between Hamlet and his mother — the tears came into his eyes — his voice faultered out the reproaches of Hamlet — he gave

the comparison of the pictures with a beautiful effect — and when he came to Hamlet's discovery of the ghost, and started up from the sofa on which he sat, with his hands raised and his eyes fixed, a stir of astonished gratification ran through the room. The instant the recitation was finished, the Prince and those who had best understood it, thronged round him to express their admiration and thanks. Many assured me they had not conceived it possible to be interested and even touched by a recitation in a language they understood so imperfectly. No one had ever heard it so clearly enunciated, or comprehended it so easily before. The excessive naturalness of his manner most surprised them — coupled as it was with a dignity perfectly easy and habitual. When he took up the book and went on with a few level sentences, with the same ease with which he had just been talking, the unintended compliment paid him was: — "Why he reads just as if he was conversing." Declamation without stilts, and effect produced with ease, were in fact something quite new to the party. The occasional playfulness of our

Roscius much struck them. When he made use of a jocular familiarity, in the famous scene in Shylock, a lively French Countess, who did not understand a syllable, said to me, "*Il rit avec tant de bon coeur qu'il me fait rire aussi malgré moi.*"—The warmest admirer could not have paid him a happier compliment.

LETTER XXV.

Crossing the bridge of boats at Manheim into modern Bavaria, I proceeded on foot across the fertile flat towards Worms; a place which my German friends in the spruce modern capitals wondered I could have any interest to see. A few Bavarian troops, in their handsome sky-blue uniforms, quartered in the little fortified *tête du pont* on the opposite side, reminded one of the new masters of this *cidevant* piece of the French Empire. Some of the same differences in the features of the scene which had struck us on crossing from the left to the right bank were again observable. The straggling hamlets along the road side, with their little white cabins, were as different as possible from the dirty walled towns on the other side, in the intervals between which you never see a house. Some of the peasants, who, instead of the light

ladder waggons were driving carts with one huge ox in the shafts, speak a more French-ified German. If you ask the way, they reply — "*Es geht immer* toujours *fort;*" and for *walking* they use *promeniren*, instead of the true German *spatzieren*. Many of them speak a bad French; and I met with one or two raw, unhinged-looking fellows, who had served in the French army, and had acquired just enough of the language and the vivacity it imparts to appear fairly denationalised, and resemble neither Frenchmen nor Germans.

Frankenthal was the only town before Worms. It is a bustling lively place, communicating by a canal with the Rhine, and presenting some traces of the active trading industry which a rich colony of French and Dutch refugees formerly gave to it. One of its chief manufactories was converted by the French government into a great magazine of mendicity for the department of Mont Tonnerre — a curious illustration of the descent from commercial opulence to beggary, which an exclusively warlike system will often produce.

It was quite dark when I reached

Worms. Arriving late, alone, and without equipage, the fat landlord of the inn I entered replied to my enquiry for a bed with a scrutinising look and a demand for my passport—just as the host of an English public house would make a similar demand of a travelling tar with one arm, begging his way to Portsmouth. My passport, for which I had rarely had occasion in Germany, was unluckily sent forward with my trunks; and the answer that I had none was followed up by a brisk refusal of all accommodation from the dainty host. I knew the relenting character of a German landlord's dignity too well to be dismayed; and as Worms was now a garrison town of the Grand Duke of Hesse, I plied him with the names of half a dozen dignitaries of the Court, whom I now found invaluable friends in need. The application took instantaneous effect on the haughty proprietor of the White Horse; though, not to let himself down too abruptly from his stately elevation, he at first only condescended to reply rather gruffly—"*Dann konnen sic platz nehmen*," "then you may take a place:" but his subsequent handings

first, and preventings of my wishes at supper, where he assigned me the place of honour, sufficiently proved that my titled acquaintances had happily removed all his *primâ facie* prejudices against a pedestrian without passport. During supper, which took place in the dirty dark saloon, (for every thing is dirty and dark at Worms,) a fat unsentimental looking dame played us some languishing airs on a twanging harp, the melody of which seemed entirely lost on the Hessian officers, who were smoking, boozing, and playing drafts at a beer-stained table just by. A hardy chasseur, in his green hunting dress, who came in late, was paying his respects to a savoury German sallad, a not very delicate, but by no means unpalatable, olio of potatoes, fish, anchovies, lettuce &c.; and the soft strains of the lady were soon driven to give place to the brawling mirth of these sensual rather than sentimental guests.

Worms, which from the days of the old Frankish kings who had a palace there, to those of Luther and the reformation, was the scene of Royal Residences, brilliant *Champs de Mai*, and solemn diets of the

empire, is now a mouldering mass of meanness and desolate decay—like Mayence, only enlivened by a riotous garrison of Hessian troops. The final blow to its consequence was its devastation by the French, in 1689. Of its 30,000 inhabitants not more than 5000 remain—and its commerce, which distinguished it among the Hanseatic cities, is now confined to the wine made from its celebrated vineyards, and the tobacco it grows and manufactures. The Cathedral, a massy ponderous Gothic edifice, commenced in the eighth century, is an interesting but dreary vestige of grandeur.—The bare, dismantled walls of the interior, with its falling pinnacles and ornaments, and the wretched desolation of the houses of the Chapter, give it a melancholy deserted air. It has neither statues, pictures, or any thing of interest on a close inspection; but seen from a distance, its lofty nave and four steeples rise with an imposing grandeur in the level plain of the Rhine.

Pictures of Luther and his venerable friends are exhibited in the booksellers' windows; and the Lutheran Church con-

tains a fresco painting of the reformer appearing before the splendid assembly — a mere modern manufacture, put up since the re-building of the church after the destruction in 1689, and possessing no interest or merit.

Winding through the dark, narrow streets, and passing the solid decayed ramparts, I left the old city by the road towards Mayence. Just out of it, on the right, stands the Gothic monastery of *Lieb Frau*, (the Dear Virgin,) surrounded by little inclosures of vines, in which the peasants were busily engaged in the *Vendanges*. The wine produced in this little spot is one of the choicest in the country, and known by the name of *Liebfrauen Milch* (the Virgin's Milk): but a peasant in dirty boots, whom I saw treading out the juice from a tub of grapes, did not give me the most exquisite idea of the process of producing the Virgin's Milk.

I crossed the Rhine in a fisherman's shalop somewhat lower down to Gernsheim, a dirty little town, famous as the birthplace of Schäffer, the celebrated cotemporary, son-in-law, and partner of Faust, the

earliest printer. After a homely dinner at the table d'hôte of the best inn, I pursued my walk over the dreary but fertile plain towards Darmstadt. For two leagues the open arable country, without a hedge or inclosure, presented a monotonous scene; after which I entered a sandy path, through a thick, gloomy, fragrant forest of firs, stretching close up to the town, where I arrived late, heartily tired of a walk of eight leagues, without sufficient beauties to beguile the way.

I found the society of the Court enlivened by the presence of some interesting guests — the Ex-queen of Sweden, with her son and daughter the young Prince and Princess. The beauty of the Queen gained for her, on the throne of Sweden, the appellation of the Helen of the North; and her character had been described to me in colours that excited my curiosity to see her. This opportunity I enjoyed at an entertainment given by the Hereditary Princess of Hesse to gratify her young nephew and niece. The Queen, now above thirty years of age, still retains that interesting expression of countenance

which is the best part of beauty. Her figure is slender and graceful; and her delicate complexion, and soft grey eyes, give to her features which are not quite regularly Grecian, an expression of feminine softness almost bordering on timidity. She has all the appearance of having suffered much: but the expression of her countenance is rather that of pensive mildness than of melancholy. Her features have a tone of quick sensibility, which a lady happily described to me, in observing that the Queen always appeared on the point of smiling or weeping. Her manners are simple and frank in the highest degree. Her Majesty described to me, with the most good-humoured *naiveté*, the details of a perilous sea voyage which she had undertaken from Sweden, in which, after tossing about and much danger, she was obliged to put back to the port from whence she embarked. Sweden was a subject which I should naturally not have touched upon myself: but her Majesty seemed to speak of it without painful reminiscences. She is a good English scholar, and admired the poems of Lord Byron and Moore.

The former had inspired her with a particular interest; and, like her sister the Princess of Hesse, she was eager to know all the details I could give her concerning the poet. She pitied his misfortunes, and at once lamented and wondered that a man so highly gifted should be so apparently miserable. In the intervals of the conversations I enjoyed with this amiable female she would frequently watch, with an air of attentive satisfaction, the gaiety of her son and daughter, who were joining in the dance with the characteristic ardour of their age and their German education. The Princess is of a slender delicate figure, not without grace. The Prince, a tall well-looking youth of sixteen, simple and good-humoured, with a strong resemblance to his father, is now pursuing his education at the University of Heidelberg, under the care of a respectable Swiss governor. This gentleman, who was enjoying every advantage of rank, youth, and fortune in his own country, was induced, by an activity of character, and a zeal to be useful to suffering virtue, to undertake the anxious task of the

Prince's education. To qualify himself for his undertaking, he applied with unwearied diligence to perfect his own to the point which he conceived indispensable for the discharge of his duty. For a long time he found his task laborious and appalling: but the young Prince's character soon cheered his labours, and gradually produced a warm attachment between the tutor and his pupil, now grown into a fondness which makes it difficult for the former to leave his charge, even for a few days, without uneasiness. The Queen has some thoughts of sending her son to an English University. It is a curious coincidence that the young Prince is, within a few weeks, of the same age with the Prince Oscar, the son of Bernadotte, and, at present, heir presumptive to the throne of Sweden.

Considering all circumstances, the young Prince may probably indulge some distant hopes of ascending the throne, from which the imprudent heroism of his father, and the ambition of Napoleon have apparently excluded him. His near connection

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stout heart before the first pretty *bourgeoise* in whom his imagination sees a damsel of romance. His Majesty resided for some time at Frankfort, where his inaptness to the prose of life involved him in a squabble with a plain-dealing merchant, to whom a case, containing the insignia of royalty, was consigned from Sweden for his Majesty's use. The merchant demanded the expences of transportation, which his Majesty thinking it beneath his dignity to pay before he received the packet, the valuable casket was in a fair way of remaining with the merchant, but for the intervention of a French diplomatist of my acquaintance, who, from pure good-nature, and in spite of the unseemly appearance at that time of interesting himself for an emigrant monarch, exerted his influence, and put Gustavus in possession of his property. The King opened his treasures in presence of his friend the ambassador; and on taking out, amongst other things, a miniature of Louis XVIII., asked him, probably undesignedly — "*Le* reconnoissez *vous*?" to which the wary Frenchman promptly replied —"*Je le* connois." The precious contents of

the packet the King afterwards sent, with a letter of admonition, to his son. Basle is the present scene of his Majesty's exploits, from whence he sent not long ago to his amiable Queen a sentence of divorce, procured without the least pretence of blame on her part. His susceptible heart lately fell into the chains of a fair banker's daughter, whose friends were not quite pleased with the nature of his Majesty's attentions; and his proposal of a marriage with the left hand, by no means satisfied them. The Count Gottorp, however, valiantly persisted in his overtures; and at last procured the opportunity of indulging his chivalrous propensities in a single combat with his fair one's uncle, which ended without serious damage to either party. The impression of the banker's daughter was not, however, effaceable. Caroline used to appear to him in visions in various attitudes and shapes — sometimes strangely confounded in appearance with a Princess of Mecklenburg, with whom his Majesty had once been on the point of a marriage. One lucky day the disconsolate lover, partly in despair of success, and partly

on the strength of an invitation to England from the Prince Regent, took resolution to depart. The hour arrived; the post-horses were at the door, and the royal lover ready to step into the carriage, when Caroline's little lap-dog, which had always before been rather shy of his Majesty's caresses, presented itself at the coach door, and laid hold of his coat. This had too much the air of an embassy from his relenting fair one not to melt at once the King's feeble resolution. The Prince Regent's invitation was forgotten — the post-horses sent away — and the romantic monarch returned to his pursuit with his courage renovated by the lap-dog's caresses. Some time ago, advertisements appeared in his Majesty's name in the German papers, announcing his project of a grand crusade to Palestine, and calling on all chivalrously disposed persons to enlist under his banners. This, however, was prematurely and surreptitiously published. The pious King had merely composed one of the same nature, with a view to publish it, and showed it to a bookseller, whom he consulted as to the publication. The man, recollecting the heads

of what he had seen, sent them to the Hanau Gazette, which thought them much too extraordinary to be kept from the public.

Another visitor, who adorned rather than enlivened the Court circles, was the Prince Frederic of Hesse *, a son of the Grand Duke, and a Marshal in the French army. His fine heroic figure, embellished by the uniform of a French Marshal, but ill accorded with the complacent insipidity of his conversation, and the gloomy turn of his character. The Prince has passed much of his time in France and Italy, among Catholics and priests, and under the protection of the Pope, who have availed themselves of a weak serious character to convert him to their religion. Though a young man, he is now a zealous Catholic devotee, without gaiety or life. He keeps up a correspondence with his Holiness,

* This amiable, though gloomy young Prince must not be confounded with the old *Landgrave* Frederic of *Hesse Cassel*, the father of the intended Duchess of Cambridge, whose resemblance in character to his brother the Elector has acquired for him the name of "the Tyrant of Rumbelheim."

from whom he received the other day a Latin epistle, full of affection, and inviting him to make the Vatican his head quarters in a tour he is about making in Italy. His Highness has sanguine hopes of receiving a Cardinal's hat in reward for his zeal.

LETTER XXVI.

The memory of Luther appears to be held in great and general veneration among the members of his religion. "*Notre Luther*," "*Notre grand Luther*," are the affectionate phrases with which he is often recalled. A print of the square sturdy champion, often matched by a quaint one of Catharine von Bora his spouse, decorates many an inn-parlour, and is rarely wanting in the houses of the pastors. At Worms a series of daubed prints, of scenes in his many coloured life, was exhibited on the booksellers' counters; his hymns are sung on all solemn occasions; histories of his life and acts are circulated in all sizes, and adapted to all capacities; and the Lutheran divine rarely concludes his discourse without an allusion to his great prototype. I happened to be at Darmstadt on the 31st of October, the

third centennary of the commencement of the Reformation. The Grand Duke of Hesse and his family being Lutherans, (the Elector of Hesse Cassel is of the Reformed religion,) the day was celebrated with much ceremony and respect. It was far more strikingly observed than a Sabbath; for in addition to the closing of shops, and the suspension of all business, the Protestant ambassadors, nobility, and towns-people made a more conscientious point of attending church in their best equipages and uniforms. The evening of the 30th was announced by a full chorus of solemn hymns sung from the top of the tower of the Lutheran church, and the 31st was ushered in at day-break by a repetition of the same impressive but curious ceremony. The hymns were of a simple and striking melody, and executed with great skill and effect. At ten o'clock the whole Court, with their attendants, *en grand gala*, proceeded to the great church; the Grand Duchess and her ladies, (bating a pretty Catholic *dame d'honneur*, who staid at home to bite her lips and wish Luther *au diable*,) in the grand state coach, with eight cream-

coloured palfreys, ambling in blue velvet trappings. A dusty picture of the Reformer was removed for the occasion from the Hotel de Ville, and suspended in the church, adorned with wreaths and flowers. The church was crowded to excess; the Court and *gens comme il faut* occupied the galleries. A *Te Deum*, and some fine pieces of music, concluding with the grand hymn called, *par excellence*, "Luther's Hymn," were admirably executed by the orchestra of the Court Chapel, accompanied by the swelling voices of the congregation. The effect was solemn and striking.

An additional interest was given to the day by its being made, in many States, the first public recognition of the new union of the two Protestant sects, the Lutheran and the Reformed—which the Grand Duke of Nassau, (in order to prevent differences of religion among his children, himself being a Lutheran, and his wife of the Reformed Church,) has been the first to decree, and which is now rapidly spreading through the other states. In Prussia the King received the sacrament, for the first time, according to the form of the United

Church. The ritual of the Holy Supper was almost the only essential difference in the worship of the two religions. The new "Evangelical Christian Church," most scrupulously unites them. In the Lutheran form, small wafers are delivered whole to each communicant; the Reformed, in more violent opposition to the Catholics, use slices of bread, which are broken and distributed. Each sect now makes a slight concession towards alliance, and the new United Church uses a large Lutheran wafer, with the Calvinistic form of breaking it. The animosity of doctrinal differences, which thirty years ago denied to the Reformed at Frankfort a place of worship in the town, though the Lutherans were upon the most friendly tolerating terms with their Catholic neighbours, having now subsided into the most quiescent apathy, this amalgamation of forms was almost all that remained to be done. If this amity of spirit had not existed, the publication of edicts, and prescription of forms, would indeed be useless: but it is a pleasing evidence of the increased liberality of ideas, that the spirit of union has gradually grown

up between the sects, and that the formal junction was all now wanting.

This cordial alliance between brother Jack and brother Martin is not, as you may suppose, observed by brother Peter without considerable heart-burnings and jealousies. The Catholics have exerted all their little influence with the Protestant governments to throw obstacles in the way; and the *Grand Chambellan* of the Court of Hesse, a sturdy disciple of St. Peter, was obliged reluctantly to obey the calls of office, and figure with a wry face and full costume at the commemoration behind the Grand Duchess. A shrewd French Catholic was for making the union more perfect, and asked me if I did not think there was as much affinity between the Lutherans and the Catholics, as between the Lutherans and the Reformed; and therefore that a union between the two former was not less practicable and desirable. I could only reply, that it remained with them to effect such a union by turning Protestants. The two Protestant religions are as yet not formally united by a Grand Ducal decree in the Grand Duchy

of Hesse. The reigning family consequently received the sacrament after the old form: but, in token of their liberal views on the subject, the Reformed pastors were admitted to assist the Lutherans in the ceremony. An appropriate sermon was preached by a Lutheran divine; and the day ended with such rejoicings among the lower orders as always close the Sunday — dancing, smoking, and a little singing and boozing, in the beer-houses. Celebrations proportionably inferior in splendour were universal in the villages. I happened to visit the day before the pastor of a cure in the neighbourhood. I found him busily engaged in superintending the rehearsal of the music for the commemoration. An excellent band, chiefly of musicians from the Residence, were scraping with enthusiasm at desks in the chancel; and in a little rustic church, with a dozen deal pews, I heard some noble music executed in a style which might have delighted a circle of connoisseurs. The vocal parts were performed by the young men and damsels of the village, whose strong natural voices

were improved by a respectable share of science. Luther's grand hymn concluded the concert. The parson was ready with his florid discourse for the next day, which he showed me in MS., and which he was learning by heart with rhetorical emphasis, according to the common custom of the Lutheran clergy.

If, according to Swift's allegory, it was brother Jack who, in stripping the gold lace from Peter's coat, rent the cloth itself, the Lutherans, in *their* aversion to its ornaments, have reduced it to a Quaker-like drab frock. Their form of worship, in its determined simplicity, appears to me singularly cold, unimposing, and phlegmatic. It has much of the bald, plebeian features of the conventicle, without any of the fervour which, in some eyes, gives them so truly spiritual a character. It is a meeting, not of Methodists prepared to supply with zeal the absence of ceremony and pomp—but of good orderly respectable Germans, addressed by a heavy *Herr Pfarre* in black, who prefers the burly pomp of rounded mystic periods got by heart, alike to the argu-

mentative theology of our orthodox divines, and the off-hand raptures of our inspired tailors and coblers. A few prayers, without regular form, much singing, and a sermon, form the solemnity. The hymns are the only parts of the service that savour at all of earnestness; and the inspiration is here quite as much that of musical taste as of devotion.

Whether the variations in public rites can or not be considered as at all accounting for the difference, it is obvious to every observer that religion has much less influence as a practical principle in Germany than with us. Our sects and schisms, and controversial theologians, multiplied to infinity, of themselves prove the superior importance which we attach to these momentous matters. With the exception of Madame Krudener, the peasant prophet Adam Müller, and some other *têtes exaltées*, you rarely hear in Germany of any who erect a standard for themselves, or take the trouble to deviate from the beaten track. The pastors and their flocks go on tranquilly, with their sermon and hymns in the morning, their pipe, their waltz, or their play in the

Sunday evening, and no excessive earnestness or spiritual zeal has as yet stimulated the one or the other to an enquiry whether more of the sabbath was not intended for sacred uses; whether this pleasant recreation from the fatigues of the week is or not what the commandment intends by a day of rest. If temporal rest alone were intended, the Lutherans make a point of enjoying it more scrupulously than the Catholics; for the last, as the mass, *salut*, and vespers make almost a Sabbath of every day, revenge themselves by ranking Sunday much on a level with the other days of the week, and keeping open shop, &c. &c.

The Germans are, however, too serious a people to be strikingly deficient in religious feeling; they unquestionably have much: but their religion in general appears to me rather that of moods and impressions—a mounting of the head on hearing a sermon, or being struck with an event—than a sober feeling of practical influence. A Princess, whose conduct savoured little of religion, used frequently to shed a sincere tear at a discourse, and has assured me, with great fervour, "*Tout ce qui tient à la religion*

me pénétre au cœur." A lady making such a speech in England would be set down for an enthusiast; especially if her practice was not more in keeping with her feelings than that of my illustrious German acquaintance.

That the forms of religion are as much respected as they are is almost miraculous, and a result of the serious character of the people, considering the entire separation of all civil consequence from religion and its ministers; for the Lutherans, in their Anti-catholicism, run into the opposite extreme in the organisation of their hierarchy, as much as in the character of their worship. Spiritual pride may be engendered by too much of the pomp of Cardinals' hats, croziers, and mitres: but there is a golden mean, which it is desirable to hit, between these inflating trappings, and the insignificance of a church of poor pastors without dignity or consequence. The German pastor is not only so entirely below the cast of nobility as to rank literally scarcely above an upper servant in the family in which he is tutor; but the bourgeoisie of the first and even second classes

consider themselves in every respect his superiors. The majority of pastors are the sons of low tradesmen, inn-keepers, mechanics, &c. Their cures rarely exceed 100*l.* *per annum*; and a much greater number produce between 20*l.* and 50*l.* To attain these appointments, which are in the gift of the Prince, they are obliged to study at the University, and to extend their acquirements to a knowledge of Hebrew sufficient to translate the Bible. Being educated vastly above the rank they hold in society, the pastors are not unfrequently discontented. Society affords no opening for their talents. The preachers at the Court Chapel and the members of the Ecclesiastical Board, who manage the affairs of the Church in many of the little States, are at the summit of Ecclesiastical consequence — but in society these Dignitaries of the Church are mere cyphers — and a *Bourgeois* of any importance devotes his son to any trade or any petty provincial office under Government rather than to the Church.

LETTER XXVII.

We embarked, early in the morning, on board the *Diligence d'eau*, which departs daily from Mayence for Cologne — a narrow comfortless vessel, in which the passengers are stowed, with an assortment of sundry packages, in an inconvenient cabin. The sun, half obscured by the fogs from the river, glared forth with a murky redness, burnishing the broad smooth face of the river, and giving a striking effect to the scenes from which we glided. Cassel, with its houses and light minaret steeple, stood out a little black promontory in the bed of liquid fire connected by the dark bridge of boats, with the venerable red towers and buildings of Mayence, which looked doubly striking in the halo of ruddy mist which covered them. It is at Bingen that the fine scenery of the Rhine commences — but between Mayence and Bingen the country has all

the charm of luxuriant richness and a mixed cultivation.

The splendid chateau of Biberich, the residence of the Grand Duke of Nassau, appeared on the edge of the river. The Grand Duchy of Nassau is one of the most picturesque and fertile territories of Germany. It runs along the right bank of the Rhine from Cassel opposite Mayence, to the junction of the river Lahn with the Rhine near Coblentz—comprehending the luxuriant Rhingau, Hochheim, Johannisberg, Rüdesheim, and all the other genial spots which regale, with pure Rhenish, the *bons vivans* of Europe. Hochheim stands on a little sunny elevation on the Maine, between Frankfort and Mayence.—The little town is surrounded by vineyards, with scarcely a tree to obstruct a single ray of sun — but the choice wine of the place, which every turtle-fed alderman flatters himself he drinks, is produced on a little hill of about eight acres, behind the ancient deanery, which seems formed to court the sun, and is protected by the town from the north winds. Each acre contains about

4000 vine plants, valued at a ducat a-piece; and the little hill produces, in a good year, about twelve large casks of wine, each of which sometimes sells, as soon as made, for 1500 florins (nearly 150*l.*). Hochheim was made a present, by Buonaparte to General Kellerman.

The Grand Duke of Nassau is an active, sensible, and popular young Prince. His government is well organised, and his state reckoned very prosperous. He has little or no debt — the freedom of the press exists in a high degree in his state — Wisbaden, his capital is the place of publication of the *Rheinische Blatte*, one of the most liberal Journals of Germany — and a national representation is now completely established in Nassau.

Below Biberich the Rhine has the appearance of a wide lake ornamented by two long green islands, after passing which, commences the famous district of the Rhingau. This Bacchanalian paradise, which extends on the right bank to Lorrich, several leagues below Bingen, has from time out of mind been renowned for its superior vines. An

old Carlovingian King first gave it to an Archbishop of Mayence, and it was surrounded by a rampart and ditch, some remains of which are still visible at Biberich. The current is here very slow, and as the wind was against us, and the ill-organised boat presented no facilities for rowing, we glided leisurely on with its course. A bold amphitheatre of mountains reared their dark woody heads in the distance. Nearer lay the fine undulating country of the Rhingau, "depressed in valleys, protuberant in hills, and diversified by a thousand inequalities." Its sunny hills and vine-covered slopes, spotted by white country houses, villas, and steeples — villages and ruined convents lying in the valleys; while the old walled towns of Walluff, Ellfeld, and Erbach reared their Gothic turrets immediately on the banks of the river. At some distance from the river rose the Johannisberg Mount, the rival of Hochheim, covered with a garden of vines and crowned by a chateau of the Count Metternich, originally the religious cloister of St. John. The wine produced here is the

dearest and most precious of the Rhenish wines.

The course of the river presently appeared blocked up by the chain of mountains before us; but on arriving at Rudesheim, a busy little town at the foot of the bold mountain on which is produced the famous Rüdesheimer wine, an abrupt turn in the river presented to us the gulf between rocky mountains, through which it pursues its course. At the mouth of this gulf stands the town of Bingen, embosomed in vineyards, at the edge of the stream, which is here joined by the little river Nah. The change of scene is instantaneous and striking. The fine open expanse of country at once vanishes, and is succeeded by romantic defiles of mountains hemming in the river, doubling the impetuosity of its course, and more than compensating for the cheerful scenes we had passed, by their wilder but not less fertile beauties. This style of scenery, more or less wild and picturesque, continues nearly 100 miles, as far as Bonn, where the river enters the vast level through which it continues its course to the sea.

The rugged form of the mountains at

the entrance of the gulf of Bingen, and the immense sandy flat through which the river has wandered before, have given rise to the conjecture that its course was formerly entirely stopped here — when its waters spread themselves in a vast lake, over the plain round Manheim, Mayence, Spires, Frankfort, Darmstadt, &c. Some great convulsion of nature is supposed to have opened them the narrow passage they now have through the Rhingau mountains — In support of this theory, shells and fish-bones have been discovered high up on the sides of the mountains, and their shape has been thought to present vestiges of the incursions of waves.

Bingen is a considerable little town, with an old Gothic Church and massy turreted ramparts. A neat stone bridge crosses the Nah, which flows out of a romantic valley, and forms the boundary between the Grand Duchy of Hesse and the Prussian provinces.

The motley crew of the boat, as little interesting as any collection of individuals I ever was among, all turned out to dine at the White Horse, at Bingen, a little

inn by the river side. The table d'hôte furnished us with the usual bill of fare of a small German inn — meagre soup, leaving the *bouilli* that followed all rags, and to be made palatable by cucumbers and a sort of small strong turnip in raw slices, swimming in vinegar — then followed a strong acid hash of hare, sausages, and sour krout, and other savoury *entremets*, summed up by the invariable joints of oily *baked* mutton and veal — a spit being a luxury which few German kitchens afford. The desert was as usual, clean and delicate, and not without the dainty little pile of sponge cakes, which are never forgotten in the dirtiest inn that affords a dinner. Though in face of the rich mountain, the Rüdesheimer wine was not so good as we might have procured a hundred miles distant.

Some of our crew having replenished their pipes to take a digesting puff after dinner, and others having filled their pockets with apples and grapes, to munch away the *ennui* of gazing at the fine scenery, we jumped into the barge, and pushed out into the stream. In a few moments we were floated into the eddying current of

the famous Bingen Loch — a few rocks, barely concealed by water, which stretching nearly across the river, leave a small channel near the right bank for a safe passage. Although there is nothing formidable in the appearance of these shallows, they have caused many serious accidents. A Swiss merchant on board told us they had wrecked a large cargo of his merchandise. Our fears did not prevent our observing at leisure the renowned *Mouse Tower* which rises just here on a rock in the middle of the river — a crumbling ruin — reminding us of the tradition of old Archbishop Hatto's ignoble death by ravenous rats, and of Mr. Southey's ballad on the subject, which you doubtless remember.

It is difficult to give you an idea of the luxuriant richness and beauty of the scenes we now passed. The mountains rose on each side, sometimes in rugged masses, and sometimes in round regular slopes, immediately from the banks of the river. The right bank is far more fruitful than the left — for several leagues from Bingen its range of mountains is one verdant garden — covered from the summit to the base

with the light green verdure of the well-trained vineyards — here and there interspersed with ridges and masses of rough black rock, whose rude shapes defy cultivation. On the left, on a dangerous ledge overhanging the river, and rarely with any safeguard, runs the Route Napoleon, along which, a few months ago, we drove towards Mayence, in the brightest days of summer. This magnificent road, cut with incredible labour out of the rocks which overhang the river, runs by its side from Cologne to Bingen — sometimes under craggy shelves and abrupt rocks, covered with brushwood and heather, and interspersed with a few vineyards, in spots smooth enough to bear them — sometimes across little fertile plains where the mountains slightly recede from the stream — or through orchards, vineyards, and antique villages at their base. The black purply hue of the rocks, frequently composed of basalt, slate, &c. contrasted with the delicate green of the vines which thrive in all their gullies and crevices adds to the mellow luxuriant tone of the scene. A bacchanalian might drink in intoxication from the view — every thing

has a blushing vinous colour — if there was such a thing as an Alderman of imagination his lips would water in descending the Rhine.

Passing the little slated village of Asmannhausen, whose red wine is one of the most celebrated in the country, and the old ruined castles of Königstein and Falkenberg, the town of Lorrich presented itself on the right bank, at the foot of a steep mountain, called the Kedrich, or the Devil's Ladder. The inhabitants say the Devil once attempted to mount it on horseback. Just behind Lorrich opens a narrow valley, called the *Wisper Thal*, or Whispering Valley; the defiles of which give a shrill whistling sound to the north-east wind, which the country people call the *Wisper Wind*, and consider a great phenomenon. Lorrich is the boundary of the Rhingau; and though the vineyards continue as far as Bonn, they are nowhere so rich and so copious as in this favoured district. In traversing the Rhingau, the Rhine runs nearly in the direction of East to West; so that the right bank is constantly exposed to the southern suns,

while the left is kept comparatively barren by the winds from the north. Scarcely any of the celebrated wines are made on the left bank. The Rhingau is divided into superior and inferior cantons, relatively to the excellence of their wines.—The former contain the villages on the heights;—the latter those on the banks of the river. The strongest wines are said to be made on the highest grounds — the most wholesome on those of moderate height — and the wine of the low grounds is sour and requires keeping. Among the multitude of wines which the country produces, the *Laubenheim*, *Bischeim*, and *Asmann-hausen* are considered the most agreeable — those of *Hochheim* and *Johannisberg* the most aromatic — and those of *Nierstein Markebrunn, and Rüdesheim* the strongest and most spirituous — a nicety of discrimination which at all events vouches for the connoisseurship of the worthy Germans in such matters, and which may give hints to some of our London amateurs of the grape.

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ramparts half covered with vines — and with that gloomy slated Gothic character which distinguishes all the towns on the Rhine *Bons vivans* of all ages appear to have been of one mind as to the wine of Bacharach. The Romans called the place *Bacchi ara.* Pope Æneas Sylvius used to import a tun of the wine to Rome every year; and the Emperor Venceslaus was so fond of it that he sold the citizens of Nuremberg their freedom for four casks. We passed the true *ara Bacchi*, a little lower down — a stone lying in the river between an island and the right bank. Its appearance above the water is hailed with joy by the vintagers as a sign of a dry and hot season.

We presently entered a long reach of the river which opened to us its placid and majestic course for some distance, between mountains green with vineyards and chequered with ruined castles on the summit, and spires and villages at the base. We went on shore a moment at Caub—the bargeman to pay a toll to the Grand Duke of Nassau, and a little German broker, of London, and a jovial Prussian officer to take in fresh wine

and tobacco, for consumption in the cabin. The grey ruins of the old Castle of Gutenfels crown a steep mountain, above the town, on which Gustavus Adolphus is said to have stood, giving his orders, in the thirty years war, to attack the Spaniards posted on the opposite side. On a rock, in the middle of the Rhine, opposite Caub, is a grotesque building with about fifty little slated spires and turrets, precisely resembling extinguishers. It is called the *Pfalz*, and is said to have been the favourite place of *accouchement* of the old Countesses of the Palatinate. It contains also some caverns which have served for a state prison, a purpose for which it seems infinitely more fitted, and a singular well whose spring is unconnected with the Rhine.

We glided down to Oberwesel on the left bank, formerly one of the most important of the Rhenish towns, and like all the rest inclosed in mouldering walls and fortifications, with massy round Towers, a necessary bulwark against the predatory habits of former ages. Two-thirds of the ruins which now give a Gothic interest to the banks of

the Rhine, and indeed to all the mountainous scenery in the neighbourhood, were, as you well know, the haunts of those illustrious *Chevaliers Voleurs*, whose chivalry consisted in pillaging poor merchants and peaceful towns — the worthy ancestry with whom our noble German friends are so eager to make out their relationship. In the thirteenth century the commerce of the Rhenish towns was so harassed by these patrician highwaymen, that Arnaud Walpoden, a citizen of Mayence, persuaded the merchants to form a league of defence with the other towns. More than a hundred towns on the Rhine joined it, besides many Princes, Counts, and *Seigneurs*, more civilized than their brethren. The castles of many of the robbers were burnt, and have remained picturesque ruins from those days to these; this was the origin of the famous Hanseatic league, which has contributed so much to the growth of the commerce of Europe.

From Oberwesel to St. Goar the banks are more wild and rugged than in any other parts of the voyage. Perpendicular mountains and rough black rocks with few vines

or vegetation of any sort give them an air of dreary wildness. The river is here narrow and deep, and glides on with a majestic tranquillity. In a short reach of the stream between two abrupt turns it has the appearance of a full deep lake, hemmed in on all sides by rugged inhospitable mountains. In these wilds the hermit St. Goar established himself of old for the pious purpose of preaching Christianity to the fishermen and vintagers on the banks of the river — giving his name to the little towns of St. Goar and St. Goar-hausen. A black basalt rock rears its angular shape above the river, sending forth a remarkable echo to which the bargemen called our attention. Our experimental shouts were reverberated several times from rock to rock, and we were assured that a horn would have produced an echo that would frighten us. On leaving by a short turn in the river this gloomy scene, the aspect of the little town of St. Goar, stretching its houses along the edge of the river in a fine verdant country, presents a striking and agreeable contrast. Its handsome white Caserne was occupied by a few Prussian troops, and there was an air of bustling in-

dustry in the town. The castle of Rheinfels, one of the most considerable on the Rhine, stands on a perpendicular rock above St. Goar; and its spacious walls are still blackened by its conflagration in the revolutionary war. A peaceful monastery formerly occupied its place, which the Count Thierri the Rich, of Catzennelenbogen transformed into a strong hold, where he kept his martial Court, and forced the vessels on the Rhine to pay him a tribute in passing. Sixty of the Rhenish towns opposed themselves to this oppression and blockaded the Count in his castle for fifteen months without success; but he was at last brought to quiet behaviour by the more formidable confederation before mentioned.

I left the boat at St. Goar and walked along the *Route Napoleon* to Boppart where we passed the night. It was a fine still evening and the mountains on the opposite bank sometimes crowned with trees tinted by autumn — the village of St. Goar-hausen with a white mansion of the Duke of Nassau washed by the gliding stream — the peasants paddling their little shallops homewards from the vineyards, formed a pleasant

scene of repose. Troops of peasants were hewing further incursions into the rocks, to widen the road which has been already much improved by the Prussians. In a nook on the opposite bank the little town of Welmich reared its Gothic tower and dark slated houses immediately under the mountain, near which stand the towers of two ruined castles which go by the name of the Cat and the Mouse, for what reason I could not learn. Passing a village just before Boppart I was struck by a full sound of music issuing from a little church standing half-way up the mountain. The peasants were at vespers,—the illuminated windows glimmered through the gloom of the evening, and the swelling sounds of the organ had a fine effect in the dark stillness around.

It was night when I reached Boppart, and the aquatic diligence had just arrived. The little Broker and the bulky Prussian Captain were already established, with two or three other lovers of good cheer, puffing away in a crowded room with their Rhenish before them — while a want of beds obliged us, not unwillingly, to join the Swiss mer-

chant at another Inn, where we found him intently busied with a German book of travels in our country which he was preparing to visit with enthusiastic curiosity. The little Inn furnished us a well served supper of *Krammets Vogel* (fieldfares) sausages, &c. some good Johannisberg, and beds as comfortable as a German Inn generally affords. A post bedstead is a luxury only known in palaces, and curtains are very rare accommodations. Instead of blankets you are covered with a feather bed thrown over you, often in a green silk case, which being rather of a lubricous quality you have generally the satisfaction of finding, when you wake, on the floor by the bedside. In the best Inn soap is a luxury which the people of the house rather stare when you ask for; and your demand if pressed is generally answered by a little dab of glutinous stuff like oil paint, which is the soap used in the kitchen. Besides the common *Speise Saal* or eating saloon, the best German Inns (even those at Frankfort, which are reckoned very superior) never afford more than one or two saloons for private parties, which are generally reserved for

guests of unusual distinction. The humbler parties use for a sitting-room the bed-room of one of the party. The first time I made a stay at an Inn at Frankfort, in company with some foreign friends, I hesitated at following a lady of the party who entered a bed-room opened by the waiter — imagining she was entering the chamber appropriated for her use; but my fair friend perceiving my embarrassment called out to me to follow her, assuring me that in a German Inn we were to expect no other parlour. The only part of their household economy in which the Germans show any idea of true comfort are their stoves, which, though they want the charms of a blazing social fire, circulate a soft equable heat which is very agreeable. Our crackling grates are a happy remedy against winter — but the stoves make you entirely forget it. They relieve you from the *business* of keeping warm; and you find yourself without trouble in a genial atmosphere.

LETTER XXVIII.

Our voyage from Boppart was not so interesting as that of the preceding day. The banks of the river though still mountainous and fertile, became gradually tamer and less striking as we descended. The mountains on each side are lower and more regularly rounded and flattened, and often recede from the river, leaving flat and not very picturesque plains on its banks. The vineyards are not so frequent nor cultivated with equal care. Just by the little village of Rhense, on the right bank, the boatmen pointed out the spot on the mountain where stood a famous stone called the Königstuhl, or royal seat, where the four Electors of the Rhine used to meet and deliberate on the affairs of Germany. Several peaces have been concluded here, and resolutions formed for the election and deposition of different Emperors. The Königstuhl was placed

while the left is kept comparatively barren by the winds from the north. Scarcely any of the celebrated wines are made on the left bank. The Rhingau is divided into superior and inferior cantons, relatively to the excellence of their wines.—The former contain the villages on the heights;—the latter those on the banks of the river. The strongest wines are said to be made on the highest grounds — the most wholesome on those of moderate height — and the wine of the low grounds is sour and requires keeping. Among the multitude of wines which the country produces, the *Laubenheim*, *Bischeim*, and *Asmann-hausen* are considered the most agreeable — those of *Hochheim* and *Johannisberg* the most aromatic — and those of *Nierstein Markebrunn, and Rüdesheim* the strongest and most spirituous — a nicety of discrimination which at all events vouches for the connoisseurship of the worthy Germans in such matters, and which may give hints to some of our London amateurs of the grape.

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on a spot where the territories of the four Rhenish Electors, of Mayence, Treves, Cologne, and the Palatinate touched each other, so that each could retire in a minute into his own kingdom. The town of Rhense was charged with keeping it in repair, for which it enjoyed considerable privileges. The French destroyed it in the revolutionary war, offended by its name, or the legitimacy of the purposes it served.

The immediate banks of the river were now flat and smiling, as if to give greater effect to the black mass of the famous Ehrenbreitstein rock which presently rises perpendicularly with a rugged grandeur opposite to the white palace and town of Coblentz. The mountain now presents only a black chaos of shapeless ruins and rocks. The Prussian workmen were busily employed in repairing the ruined fortifications, which, after sustaining various blockades in the wars of the revolution, were finally demolished after the peace of Luneville. The mines, rocks, walls and towers were blown up and fell with a tremendous crash into the river and the valley below. The little town of Thal Ehrenbreitstein, or Ehrenbreitstein Valley, at the

foot of the mountain, which has been several times burnt in the bombardments of the fortress, now looks cheerful and restored in the security of peace. The siege by the French during the congress at Rastadt was the most dreadful it has sustained. It was garrisoned by the troops of the Elector of Mayence, who were driven by a cruel famine to capitulate in 1799—many persons died from want—a cat sold for one florin and a half, and horse-flesh for thirty kreutzers a pound. Just out of Coblentz at a little hamlet on the other side of the Moselle some French officers were amusing themselves (in the late war) at billiards, in an hotel by the side of the Rhine. The Austrians in possession of the fortress opposite, resolved to disturb the gaiety of their enemies by a few shells; their bombs carried so exactly that they fell into the billiard room, to the consternation of the unthinking Frenchmen, who made their escape, leaving their game unfinished.

Coblentz is a handsome neat town, standing in the nook formed by the confluence of the Rhine and the Moselle. Its regular streets, white buildings, and hand-

some palace, and avenues, have an elegance and refinement, saddened by that dreary air of desertion and degradation common to many towns on the continent, whose consequence is now transferred to upstart rivals. The French converted the handsome Palace on the Rhine, built by the Elector Clement, with its Ionic portico, into a caserne; and the Prussian Hussars were cleaning their horses, and brushing their spatterdashes, under the windows of the Palace, and smoking in one of the stately wings, now a guard-room. Several thousand troops are stationed here, and it is the ordinary residence of the Generals and Governor of the district.

We breakfasted at Coblentz, at an inn on the Quay, opposite the massy Ehrenbreitstein, to and from which a flying bridge was conducting motley collections of passengers. Here a peasant's waggon, drawn by a couple of oxen, and crammed with trim maidens and dowagers, and cocked-hatted lads, in their Sunday apparel; there a travelling Baron in his calêche, with postillions in the Prussian uniform, surrounded by pedestrian groups

of all qualities and descriptions, biped and quadruped. The bridge is a spacious round platform, railed in, and placed upon a couple of stout barges. It is attached by a long chain to a boat moored higher up in the middle of the river, so that it swings in the stream at this chain's length. When filled with passengers, it is shoved off from the Quay, and its own impulse carries it to the other side, its streamers flying from long posts striped with the loyal Prussian blue and white. In this way it keeps up its monotonous swing, like the pendulum of a clock.

A handsome stone bridge crosses the Moselle, which is enlivened by a little cluster of shipping employed in the trade in wine, and other articles, which its situation enables the town to carry on.

From Coblentz to Andernach is the least interesting part of the voyage. The Rhine flows through a wide unvaried plain; the dreary mountains of the *Westerwald*, running at some distance from the right bank, and the chain of the *Hundsdruck* receding far from the left. Passing the village of *Weisse Thurm*, (White Tower,) with a monument to the French General Hoche,

who crossed the Rhine here, opposed by the Austrians, in 1797, the pretty little Palace, and modern houses of Neuwied, appeared on the right, shaded by a fine avenue of trees.

This busy place, the capital of the Princes of Neuwied, now mediatized subjects of the King of Prussia, has a character of diminutive consequence, quite peculiar to itself. It looks like the miniature model of a splendid city. It is built with a nice regularity, and the white slated town, which would stand in one of our squares, has an air of regular grandeur and elegance. It carries on considerable trade, and is still a rendezvous for persons of all religious persuasions, whom the liberality of the Princes first invited. The Moravians have a considerable establishment here, among whom are some artists of skill; and its schools and public institutions are in good repute. The good sense of its Princes, and the reputation for industry, religious toleration, and freedom of the press which this little place has acquired, make it an object of more curiosity

to travellers than the garrison towns of many greater Princes.

After passing Neuwied, the country begins to resume its picturesque features. The ranges of mountains gradually approach the banks. On the right, on a fine wooded elevation, is perched the pleasant little chatean of *Mon Repos*, a country seat of the Prince of Neuwied; and before us, at the mouth of a sort of gulf, between the almost united chains of mountains, rose the old Gothic towers of Andernach, where we stopped a moment to pay toll. The massy ramparts, portals, and portcullises of this once considerable place, still remain to give it an air of sombre antiquity. Andernach was one of the frontier forts of the Romans, by the name of Artonacum; the portal towards Coblentz is said to be of their construction; and the old Frankish Kings had a palace here, from the windows of which, according to *on dit*, they used to catch salmon in the Rhine. It is still remarkable throughout Europe for its trade in two articles procured from the mountains in the neighbourhood—tuff-stone, which, when ground, forms an excellent cement, and which it trans-

ports in great quantities to Holland, and sometimes to America and the East Indies; and mill-stones of a superior quality. At Andernach we again entered narrow defiles of mountains, picturesquely chequered with vineyards and wood, but neither so lofty nor so luxuriantly fruitful as those higher on the river.

There is an almost unvarying uniformity of character in the Rhine scenery. The villages and towns, with a blue slated look, and half constructed of the slate which abounds in the mountains, stand thickly at their base washed by the river. A narrow valley invariably opens behind them, out of which a little stream or river finds its way through the village into the Rhine, while the ruins of the old seignorial chateau are perched on the vine-covered mountain above. Immediately beneath is the town or village, once inhabited by the Knights' dependants, and now by the peasant proprietors of a few acres of the precious vineyard. The churches and walls of the town often appear nearly as ancient as the old towers on the mountains. They have no architectural beauty, but present ge-

nerally plain round, or octagon turrets, and square massive walls, with a grotesque *melange* of slated pinnacles, minarets, and spires, which give the general character of the massy Saxon foundation, embellished by a quaint, detailed Gothic, of later date. You can easily conceive the singular and interesting character which the scene acquires from these well preserved vestiges of the days of knighthood. How is it that, in spite of their rudeness, their barbarity, and ferocity, the memorials of these our unpolished ancestors take a hold on the imagination, perhaps even stronger than the influence exercised by the chaste relics of their classical predecessors? If you will be frank, you will confess that, in spite of school prejudices, and Addison, and Sir Christopher Wren, you care more about a Gothic tower than a Roman pavement, and that the gloomy vaults of a Gothic cathedral inspire you with a stronger interest than the chaste pillars of a temple. You know our friend ——— insists that the *dark* ages ought to be called "the *light*:" but without quite going this length, we are unquestionably beginning to think the mailed

heroes of chivalry fine gallant fellows, and their mistresses nearly as peerless and as interesting dames as the Helens, the Andromaches, and the Didos, who used to monopolise all admiration. The associations of the classical ages are, in fact, now growing dim and obsolete. They relate to a people whose grandeur and refinement we must admire, but who belong to an age with which we have nothing in common, neither religion, ancestry, nor habits. But the more powerful cause is probably the highly coloured contrast which the rude manners of the days of chivalry present to the refined systems of modern society — a contrast which exists in a much less striking degree between the modern and classical times. The Romans and the Greeks were great and polished nations, like ourselves — with wise governments, refined institutions, and settled social systems, like our own. There is nothing romantic in such a state of society; and its relics of magnificence only come near to what we are in the habit of observing daily in our own productions. But when we want, for the sake of poetical interest, something the farthest re-

moved from the common-place refinement, and every-day luxury, of our own *ultra*-civilized system, the wild legends, the massy piles, the savage life, and the dark superstitions of the middle ages at once present themselves to the imagination. The graceful temple is a monument of the magnificence and luxury to which we are accustomed: but the rude hold of a robber knight, and the dark aisles of an abbey, are the true regions of poetry and romance to minds habituated to all that is snug, secure, and luxurious.

A little below Andernach, the little village of Namedy appears on the left bank under a wooded mountain. The Rhine here forms a little bay, where the pilots are accustomed to unite together the small rafts of timber floated down the tributary rivers into the Rhine, and to construct enormous floats, which are navigated to Dortrecht, and sold. These machines have the appearance of a floating village, composed of twelve or fifteen little wooden huts, on a large platform of oak and deal timber. They are frequently eight or nine hundred feet long, and sixty or seventy in breadth.

The rowers and workmen sometimes amount to seven or eight hundred, superintended by pilots, and a proprietor, whose habitation is superior in size and elegance to the rest. The raft is composed of several layers of trees, placed one on the other, and tied together; a large raft draws not less than six or seven feet of water. Several smaller ones are attached to it, by way of protection, besides a string of boats, loaded with anchors, and cables, and used for the purpose of sounding the river, and going on shore. The domestic economy of an East Indiaman is hardly more complete. Poultry, pigs, and other animals, are to be found on board — and several butchers are attached to the suite. A well-supplied boiler is at work night and day in the kitchen; the dinner hour is announced by a basket stuck on a pole, at which signal the pilot gives the word of command, and the workmen run from all quarters to receive their messes. The consumption of provision in the voyage to Holland is almost incredible; sometimes amounting to forty or fifty thousand pounds of bread; eighteen or twenty thousand of fresh, besides a

quantity of salted meat; and butter, vegetables, &c. in proportion. The expences are so great that a capital of three or four hundred thousand florins is considered necessary to undertake a raft. Their navigation is a matter of considerable skill, owing to the abrupt windings, the rocks, and shallows of the river; and some years ago the secret was thought to be monopolised by a boatman of Rüdesheim and his sons.

We stopped to dine at the little industrious town of Lintz, on the right bank, the walls and buildings of which are chiefly composed of black basalt. This little place was formerly distinguished by the privileges of a free city, and an Archbishop Engelbert of Cologne, built the castle, of which the remains are still standing near the Rhine, to enforce the payment of tolls and protect the town from the attacks of their enemies, the inhabitants of Andernach. The tall Prussian soldiers, were lounging about the streets, and flirting with the women laughing through their quaint black silk caps, brought down under the chin — their necks displaying a cluster of old-fashioned orna-

ments, which with long stiff waists and neatly pinned kerchiefs, gave them an air of primitive simplicity to which the neighbourhood of Prussian grenadiers, I apprehend, is rather dangerous. The streets, or lanes, of these diminutive walled towns are narrow and lofty, the portals low—and every thing is dark, squalid, and mouldering. The butchers' shops hardly look more inviting than shops in London of a similar description, for the service of a useful domestic quadruped—and the baker's is announced by a little dirty wired safe, projecting from the window with a few musty rolls. This air of dirty gloom, accompanied in little German towns and villages, by an atmosphere impregnated with odours, among which tobacco is a perfume, is singularly contrasted with the decent dress and demeanour of the inhabitants. You seldom see them ragged or dirty—the peasant walks out of his filthy habitation with his ample blue coat, cut after the court fashion, his cocked hat and his stick, in appearance as respectably stately as a Greenwich pensioner. Is it possible that this preference of exterior decorum to

household comfort in the peasants, can proceed from the same feeling which makes the worthy Baron often more careful of his equipage than his dinner? — Both surely arise from a formal ostentation and a phlegmatic coldness of relish for substantial enjoyments. The discomfort of the *menage* is carried to an extraordinary pitch in the higher ranks. More than one glittering lady whom I know, whose husbands dine daily at court, by virtue of their offices, invariably, when not also of the party, sit down to a meagre dish, *tête à tête* with their *femme de chambre* by way of economically avoiding two meals. The establishment of a Prime Minister of my acquaintance, consists of one female who equally presides at the spit, the toilet of the Baroness, and over the ducks and chickens of the *basse-cour*. A no less serviceable man unites the functions of *valet de chambre*, gardener, and footman; and the household is completed by a coachman, who is permitted to concentrate his faculties in the care of a pair of iron greys and an elegant chariot, whose exhibition every Sunday at Court, amply remunerates the Baron and his lady

for the *soupe maigre* and discomforts of the week.

Our companions, the London broker and the fat Prussian captain were most happily assorted in tastes. The little broker was returning in high glee to England, after a successful cruise in quest of orders among his German correspondents; and he seemed to make a point of sparing himself no costly enjoyments at the inns, sure of all being debited to the partnership account, on his return to Swithin's-lane. As to fine scenery, he had never dreamt of its being, by possibility, a source of pleasure; the most picturesque spots on the river appeared to him far behind his snug villa at Hornsey, which he described with extacy. At Lintz, the Captain and he, after dispatching their bottle at dinner took in a couple more of the most expensive on the card, to regale in the boat. The broker was of course well supplied with segars, which he was active in recommending to the few passengers without pipes, as "*best Havannahs.*" Thus fanned by his favourite odours from all parts of the cabin, he would sometimes dose with his pipe in his mouth

while his broad faced comrade snored cheek by jowl by his side. The attractions of the scenes we passed overbalanced those of this society. We generally therefore remained *sub dio;* while the Swiss merchant, who, though far removed from the Bacchanalian tastes of the two comrades, was yet a man who looked more after manufactures than mountains, divided his time between depreciating the scenery we passed by comparisons with the St. Bernard and the Furca, and studying the account of the Birmingham nails and Manchester cottons, in his German itinerary of our island.

Passing a turn in the river, below the little town of Remagen, the ragged tops of the famous Seven Mountains appeared in the distance, far above the smooth regular chains which lined the nearer banks. After passing the village of Unkel opposite which is a dangerous projection of basalt rocks into the river barely concealed by the water, the stream spreads into a glassy lake. The blue minarets and roof of the convent of Nonnenworth appear embosomed in trees on a beautiful island dividing the river. Immediately above, the

conical masses of the mountain of Rolandseck rise perpendicularly on the right bank, crowned by the scanty relics of a castle. This mountain, which is a striking object in one of the most picturesque scenes on the Rhine, takes its name of Rolandseck from Roland the nephew of Charlemagne, who according to tradition lived here in melancholy seclusion. The tale is so pretty that I send it you, at the end of this letter, with another specimen of the many romantic traditions attached to the castles and scenes I have feebly described.

We glided along between the mountain and the convent — a spacious handsome edifice shaded by willows and shrubs, with a little village adjoining. The building is said to be on the scite of that in which the *belle* of Roland sought a retreat. We found ourselves presently passing immediately under the irregular heights of the seven mountains — a cluster of rocky elevations whose wild heads, brown with forest, tower one over the other. "The castled crag of Drachenfels," (to use the accurate phrase of our poetical pilgrim)—not the highest but the most striking of the seven,

rises perpendicularly from the river, in barren rocky majesty. — The grey ruin on the summit might be mistaken for a shapeless pile of rock. — The mountain of Wolkenburg or Castle of the Clouds appears just behind; and the Stromberg with its round head, covered with thick wood, out of which peeps the belfry of a little chapel, rises on the right near the river. — Behind them you distinguish the heads of the Löwenberg, the Nieder Stromberg, the Oelberg, and the Hemmerich. The Löwenberg (Lion's mountain) which is the highest of the seven, is about 1896 feet in height. — The remains of castles are visible on all, sometimes almost buried in the thick brushwood, the only vegetation they bear. — Several of the castles are said to have been erected by the Emperor Valentinian, in the fourth century; and the Emperor Henry V. is charged with burning those of Wolkenburg, Drachenfels, and Rolandseck. — The chapel of St. Peter, on the Stromberg, was built by Didier of Schwartzeneck, a valiant knight of the neighbourhood in performance of one of those pious vows so often made by

crusaders in Palestine, to be executed on a safe return to Europe.

The seven mountains close, with an impressive grandeur, the exquisite scenery on the Rhine. — They are the highest and wildest on its banks, and the want of the green fertility of the luxuriant mountains in the Rhingau increases the rude dignity of their grotesque shapes. The chains on each side now gradually diminish, till the white handsome town of Bonn stands at the entrance of the vast unsheltered flat which stretches for leagues on all sides. The words of our bard, who has seized the character of these delightful scenes with a topographical accuracy, shall close the description to which I have done such poor justice.

——— the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of water broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine,
And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine;
And scattered cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them shine. ——

Adieu to thee again, a vain adieu.
There can be no farewell to scenes like thine;
The mind is coloured with thine every hue,
And if reluctantly the eyes resign

Their cherished gaze upon thee, lovely Rhine,
'Tis with the thankful glance of parting praise —
More mighty spots may rise, more glaring shine,
But none unite in one attracting maze
The brilliant, fair, and soft — the glory of old days.

Traditions on the Banks of the Rhine.

The tradition concerning the castle or rather hermitage of Rolandseck says, that it was christened after Roland the gallant nephew of Charlemagne, who, as the story goes, set out one day from his uncle's palace at Ingelheim on a picturesque tour, on the banks of the Rhine. — He dropped in at the Chateau of a valiant knight, who received him with a friendly squeeze of the hand; while his daughter (who like other young ladies in those good days, was not above being useful) ran to fetch him some home-made bread and wine. As she poured out the wine, with the grace of a Hebe, into a goblet adorned with the arms of the old Chatelain, and presented it with a blush to the nephew of the great king, he was struck with her beauty and modest grace; and was soon surprised to find certain enig-

matical sensations creeping about him which he had never experienced before. His arm trembled as he took the goblet, and he involuntarily said to himself — "this never happened to me in presence of the enemy, or when opposed to the thick swords of the Saracens." At night Roland could not close his eyes for the image of the beautiful Hildegonda, which stood constantly before him. In the morning, when about to take leave, his kind host demanded his name. The modest Roland blushed as he gave it, for it was the glory of the whole country; and the knight was so enchanted at the distinction of his visitor, that he begged him to stay another day — Hildegonda said not a word — but her looks were eloquent, and Roland wanted little persuasion.

The fate of the young knight's heart was decided by his stay, and he only waited for an opportunity to declare himself. Such opportunities generally present themselves — and Roland, as he walked in the garden, found the young lady sitting in a pensive reverie, in which a bolder modern beau would have flattered himself he had a place. Roland's timidity, however, made

him awkward in accosting her; and the young lady to conceal her own embarrassment, stooped to gather a rose just by. — The knight begged her to give it him. — lamenting that as yet no emblem of happy moments adorned his casque; and that when his comrades boasted the beauty and virtue of their belles, he was obliged to look down and be silent. Hildegonda with a blush complied, saying, as she presented it to him — "all that is beautiful endures but for a moment." — Roland no longer hesitated to declare his passion — they swore to each other eternal fidelity; and the knight promised to return immediately after the campaign in Palestine, to lead his mistress to the altar.

After Roland's departure, Hildegonda led a retired and pensive life. The fame of her lover's achievements reached her, and gladdened her heart. One evening a travelling knight demanded hospitality at the castle — He had served in Charlemagne's army, and Hildegonda trembled as she demanded intelligence of Roland. "I saw him fall gloriously by my side, covered with

wounds," said the knight; — Hildegonda turned pale at his words and was motionless as a statue. Ten days afterwards she asked permission of her father to take the veil; and she entered the convent of Frauenworth, in an island in the Rhine. The bishop of the diocese who was her relation, allowed her to abridge her noviciate and profess herself at the end of three months.

Roland, who it seems had been left for dead on the field and had afterwards recovered of his wounds, came soon after to her father's castle to claim the hand of Hildegonda. In his grief at the tidings he received, he built a hermitage on a rock immediately above the island of Frauenworth, and called it Rolandseck, (Roland's corner.) Here he passed the remainder of his days, sitting at the gate of his hermitage, looking down on the convent which held his beloved object. When the matins bell roused him he would rise and listen to the chaunting of the nuns, fancying he could distinguish the voice of his Hildegonda; and when at night the lights glimmered in the cells of the convent, his ima-

gination saw Hildegonda praying to Heaven for him.

Two years passed in this manner had nearly consumed his strength. One morning looking as usual down on the convent, some people were digging a grave in the garden. — Something whispered to Roland that this grave was for Hildegonda. — On sending to enquire, his conjecture proved true — he stood and watched the funeral procession, saw her corpse let down into the grave and listened to the requiem chaunted over her — and he was found not long after sitting dead before his hermitage, his eyes turned towards the convent.

Near the little village of Hirtzenach, between St. Goar and Boppart, the ruins of the two old castles of Liebenstein and Sternfels stand close together on a fine mountain covered with vines on the right bank of the river. Their grey mouldering towers nod at each other with a sort of rival dignity; and they go by the name of the two brothers. — Tradition says they were formerly inhabited by an old knight who had two sons equally dear to him, and a rich and

beautiful young orphan, was also brought up under his protection. Her charms increased with her years; and, as was very natural, the young knights both fell in love with their fair play-fellow. — When she arrived at a marriageable age the father proposed to her to choose between his two sons; but she, knowing the sentiments of both, was unwilling to grieve either by preferring his rival. The elder son however believing that her heart a little inclined to his brother, resigned his pretensions, and besought her to declare in his brother's favour. — The old knight gave the young couple his blessing, but their union was delayed. — The elder brother saw without envy, but not without melancholy, the happiness of his rival. The charms of his beloved object increased in his eyes every day, and to fly from her presence he joined the Prince residing at Rhense, and was admitted into his suite.

Just at this time St. Bernard was preaching the cross on the banks of the Rhine. — There was not a *chateau* near the river that did not send a knight to Frankfort, where the Emperor Conrad presented the Saint to the people, who all took the cross. Al-

most every castle along the river, from Basle to Cologne, mounted a streaming flag with the holy symbol of Our Saviour's sufferings; and the river and roads in the country were thronged with joyous companies flocking towards Palestine. The young intended bridegroom caught the general flame, and resolved to visit the Holy Land before leading his bride to the altar. In spite of his father's displeasure and the ill-concealed tears of the young lady, he assembled his little troop and joined the Emperor's army at Frankfort.

The old knight dying soon after, the elder brother returned from Rhense to take possession of his ancestors' castle. Love was now ready to revive more strongly than ever in his breast; — but he overcame himself, and scrupulously treated the young lady with the kind protection of a brother. — Two years had elapsed when the news arrived that the younger brother was returning from Palestine, accompanied by a beautiful Grecian dame, to whom he was betrothed. This intelligence cut his deserted fair one to the heart; and, according to the custom of the age in such disappoint-

ments, she resolved to take the veil. The elder son was indignant at this conduct of his brother; and, when a courier arrived at the castle to announce his approach, he threw down his glove, bidding him take that for answer.

The crusader arrived with his fair Grecian at the Castle of Sternfels, his paternal inheritance — and a bloody war took place between the brothers, which they were on the point of concluding by single combat, when the young lady interposed and pacified them by her persuasions. She afterwards quitted the abode of her infancy and took the veil.

Sadness and mourning now reigned in the Castle of Liebenstein — while joy and dissipation occupied the inhabitants of Sternfels. The beauties of the Grecian dame, and the graces of her conversation attracted around her all the gay knights of the neighbourhood; and she was by no means scrupulous in receiving their homage. The elder brother saw the disgrace of his brother before he himself was aware of it, and soon found an opportunity to convince him of his wife's infidelity. The young

knight would have sacrificed her to his vengeance; but she found means to escape. His elder brother pressed him in his arms as he was abandoning himself to his despair, saying—"Let us live henceforth together without wives, to do honour to the grief of our first love who is now passing the brightest days of youth in a convent." The younger brother agreed, and they remained bachelors and inseparable friends for the rest of their days. Their race expired with them—and their old ruined castles, which still retain the name of "The Brothers," remind the traveller of their history.

Almost every castle, and many of the mountains and rocks along the banks, and in the neighbourhood of the Rhine, have a tradition of this kind more or less credible and romantic connected with them. I have selected the two above as being somewhat more "within the prospect of belief," than many others, in which dragons, talkative birds, wonder-working saints, and other equivocal personages cut a conspicuous figure.

LETTER XXIX.

The barge arrived at Bonn, just as the evening closed in. In company with our Swiss companion we went to the best inn, by no means superabundant in comfort. The children in the streets flocked around us begging for a trifle to buy wood to make a fire on the mountains, on the approaching Martinmas-day. The landlord received us with a sulky indifference, and the fat landlady, who with her son was seated at the long table in the saloon devouring a romance, condescended to raise her eyes and cast on us a look of cool scrutiny, after which she resumed her studies. Literature seemed the fashion of the house. The landlord, taking up an Itinerary which I laid on the table, and casting his eye through it with a critical knowingness, laid it down with an assurance that the book was *very incorrect*—

But when I requested to be informed in what respects, it seemed that the author had given the town of Bonn credit for one or two manufactories, which no longer existed — as mine host was pleased to add, "thanks to the English." — Manufactures I soon found were a sore subject at Bonn, and had even interest enough to divert the attention of the sentimental hostess. The Swiss was endeavouring to extract from her spouse a true confession of his feelings towards the new Prussian Government, which, in spite of equivocation, it was evident, coincided with that of most of its subjects on the Rhine — when the fair romance reader broke out, addressing herself to me. — "No — it is not the Prussians — we should not complain of them — if it was not for the English — it is they that cause all our misfortunes, why can't they keep their manufactures to themselves? instead of ruining others.— When the French were here we had twenty or thirty manufacturers who employed all the people in the town — now they are all out of work and begging — we must starve that they may get rich — and then they come

abroad proud of their money, but won't spend it. — It is the English that we dislike — and that is the truth." And, reposing her head on her arm, she returned to her book in triumphant satisfaction at her unanswerable logic. The landlord contented himself with an occasional pithy expression of assent to his spouse's burst of eloquence — and at supper, which presently interposed, I endeavoured, by mollifying civilities, to dissipate the good lady's bile which seemed to rise to her eyes every time she regarded an Englishman.

Bonn is a compact little town, white, cleanly, and cheerful in spite of its antiquity. The light Gothic Cathedral is a graceful structure, and the old Electoral Palace presents a handsome white *façade* towards the seven mountains, which close the picturesque view through the avenues of the palace gardens.

From Bonn to Cologne there is nothing worth describing, either by land or water — a dreary plain of sands stretching, on both sides of the river, nearly to the boundary of the horizon. The first entrance into this wide level, on descending a hill on the

road from Juliers, was very striking as we passed in the summer. The grand expanse of flat before us seemed to announce the magnificence of the stream we were approaching. At three or four leagues distance, in the midst of a sandy plain, rose the wide city and innumerable steeples of Cologne — and to the right the horizon was bounded by the blue irregular tops of the seven mountains. Cologne, once the Holy City, now the dirty focus of decaying Catholicism, loses all its grandeur and much of its interest, on a nearer survey. It is, beyond question, the dirtiest and most gloomy city of its size in Europe. It runs along the Rhine about a league, from one wall to the other; — its depth is about half a league; — but its streets are all shabby, narrow lanes, and its *places* irregular open spaces, overgrown with weeds, whose dreary chasms and mouldering tenements are now and then varied by a solitary mansion, a vestige of old-fashioned splendour. The people you meet are as motley and miserable as the buildings. It is difficult to give you an idea of the squalid wretchedness of the sa-

vage looking, bustling crowds, who flew upon us, seizing our luggage as we landed on the quay. Porters, commissioners, guides, *valets de place*, and *voituriers* assailed us with a clamouring activity doubly striking, after the phlegmatic and decorous respectability to which we had been accustomed in Germany. The *Kölners*, or inhabitants of Cologne, are regarded in Germany as a people quite *sui generis*. They have nothing German in their character or appearance, and some pretend still to trace in their features their origin as Roman Colonists. The population, which is now diminished to about 50,000, comprises abundance of foreigners resembling each other in the common character of superstitious Ultra-Catholics, which the dress, dirt, and lazy wretchedness of most of those one meets sufficiently indicates. Its steeples, which were once said to be as numerous as the days in the year, have undergone a considerable thinning, which has also luckily extended to its beggars, who before the occupation by the French, carried on a systematic trade to the number of 12,000, having appropriate stations, which de-

scended from father to son. About half a dozen of the sixty-nine convents remain to enjoy the meagre relics of plunder. Those of the *Dames Nobles* are completely annihilated. In one place you see a spacious monastic building occupied by some scanty bales of merchandize or a rusty iron crane, announcing the mercantile *secularity* of its uses; or a handsome church with a portico and ornamented walls, turned into a caserne; or with boarded windows, announcing its present uselessness. I visited a Convent inhabited by about half a dozen Ursuline Nuns, in a retired quadrangle, where they appeared to lead a tranquil and easy life. It is, I believe, the only one which remains for women above the lower orders. The superior, a portly middle-aged lady, was at first disposed to be haughty and incommunicative, but relaxed, on a few civil speeches, into an easy affability. The convent had once contained three times the number of nuns — but the French had stripped it of its treasures; and the remaining few live narrowly on some small funds which had escaped.

The Cathedral is indeed a splendid ves-

tige of magnificence, in the midst of the Catholic rubbish which surrounds it. Had the original plan, of which you have seen drawings, been completed, it would have surpassed in size and grandeur any work of architecture in the world. In its present, not even half-finished state, it is the most imposing specimen of massy, majestic, and yet graceful Gothic which I ever saw. The entry at the western gate was very impressive, in spite of the litter of workmen and scaffolding in the nave. The church, like most continental cathedrals, has five wide aisles, divided from each other by a quadruple range of massy clustered columns which in spite of their gigantic dimensions, have an air of well-proportioned elegance, enriched by a highly wrought capital of flowers varied on every column. The number of columns in the cathedral is said to be a hundred — and as you look obliquely across the gloomy aisles they give you the idea of an architectural forest. The choir and the external aisles only are complete — the pillars of the nave are cut short at half their designed height by an unseemly cieling of boards. The lofty

arches and chaste groined cielings of the side aisles are very beautiful. As the eye wanders up their almost interminable perspective, the mellow colours of the rich painted windows of the choir close the grey vista with a striking effect. The walls and pillars of the cathedral (the stone of which came from the quarries on the Drachenfels, and is durable and entirely undefaced) are judiciously left in their natural grey colours — this adds much to the solemn gloom of the edifice. — Its characteristics are a substantial majesty and a grand simplicity of style, unspoilt by the minute finishings and beauties of detail, which some consider the perfection of Gothic architecture.

Our hobbling old *valet de place*, (whom His Majesty of Prussia had kindly selected for us — a solemn order in the Inns forbidding the use of any person of this description, except a score, licensed by the Prussian government,) conducted us with a mechanical impulse to the great Lion of the Catholics — the tomb of the Three Kings. He had no idea that any thing could be so interesting as their real skulls and

mock crowns. These invaluable bones repose in a neat little Grecian chapel, at the back of the choir, in which we were received by a palsied old priest, groping about its darkness with a flaring candle in his hand, by the assistance of which, he pointed out to us very elaborately the beauties of the various treasures of which he was the guardian. — The tomb is a large long case composed of solid gilded silver, curiously wrought, and adorned with pillars and architectural representations, images of the three kings, and a variety of saints, many of them of massy gold. The texts and inscriptions are in golden letters, and the little nicely proportioned pillars, are of the richest blue enamel. The intermediate spaces between the statues, columns, &c. are studded with beautiful antique gems, and precious stones, of rare size and quality, to each of which the old ecclesiastical Ciceroni, as he held the candle to them, affixed the value of at least so many thousand francs. On opening the side of the case the skulls of the three wise men appeared, carefully lodged on a shelf in a bed of wool — each supporting a sim-

ple gilded crown, decorated with pearls. On the ledge above, their names, Gaspar, Melchior, Balthazar, are inscribed in letters of rubies. To trace the journey of these precious skulls from Judea to their present abode, has hitherto puzzled all but the believing Catholics of Cologne, who have no more doubt of the fact than if they possessed authenticated vouchers from all the hands through which they must have passed — It appears they were presented in gratitude by the Emperor Frederic the First, on the taking and pillage of Milan, in 1170, to an Archbishop of Cologne, his follower, who deposited them in the cathedral; but how they arrived at the city of Milan, unless, like the Santa Casa in Italy, they flew there, it seems difficult to ascertain. — According to Moore's lines —

> And they believe him — oh the lover may
> Distrust that look which steals his soul away,
> The babe may cease to think that it can play
> With Heaven's rainbow; — Alchymists may doubt
> The shining gold their crucibles give out;
> But Faith, fanatic Faith, once wedded fast
> To some dear falsehood, hugs it to the last.

The old priest uncovered these sacred re-

lics with a reverential caution, regarding us with a sort of inquisitive triumph, as much as to ask if we were not penetrated with admiration and respect—a conclusion which we left him to infer from silence, while some fair Catholics who were with us burst out "*Voyez vous? voila les trois sages!*" as if they saw the *bona fide* crowned figures in their Oriental robes—an ejaculation of pious credulity, soon followed up by one of purely feminine admiration "*Regardez lez perles! qu'elles sont superbes!*" The reign of French violence which has thinned the convents and churches of Cologne, was not as you may imagine more lenient to its superstitious treasures; and this splendid tenement of crumbling bones, was danced about with the exiled Chapter into Westphalia, to Hamburg, and in various other directions. The shocks of the journey, the pilferings of the hands through which the treasures passed, and the conversion of many a splendid gem into bread for the use of the hungry Chapter, sent back the bones in high preservation, but the case considerably impoverished. — The place of the gold crowns is consequently now

supplied by gilded metal — and the faithful *Kölners* have come forward with all the precious stones and paste imitations they could muster, which under the direction of a distinguished professor and skilful artists have been used to patch up the mausoleum into something like its original costliness. — The old priest, who looked as if one of the diamonds would put him in possession of more comforts than he had enjoyed for some years, assured us with evident satisfaction, *Apres tout, il vaut encore au moins huit millions de francs* — eight millions of francs! locked for admiration in a grated chapel, in a cathedral whose half-starved canons skulk about with barely *soutanes* to their backs, and whose altars are thronged with the mendicity and misery of the town!

We ascended one of the magnificent fragments of the massy towers at the west front, which were designed for a height of 500 feet; but one of them reaches only about twenty, while that which we mounted is about half perfect. — The immense rough area overgrown with weeds on the top appeared like a spacious yard, from which we

had a noble prospect over the thickly built city with its still numerous towers and steeples, — the Rhine washing one flank of it and separating it from the dirty town of Duitz. The upward course of the river lay before us through a flat scene as far as Bonn and the Seven Mountains; — and towards Holland we just discovered the steeples of Dusseldorf.

Our valet-de-place proposing, amidst a string of other ecclesiastical curiosities, that we should pay a visit to the "*onze milles Vierges*," we considered the sight much too singular to be neglected. Following through mazes of dirty lanes, we came to the church of St. Ursula — a fair dame, who is said to have landed, after a shipwreck, at Cologne, with *eleven thousand virgins* in her suite. The Huns, who occupied the place, were much smitten with this bevy of beauties: but the young ladies all of course preferred taking the veil to listening to these uncouth paramours; and, in commemoration of their virtue, was founded the convent of Noble Ladies of St. Ursula. The church, a respectable Gothic edifice, is entirely lined with their bones, or some

others equally good, arranged carefully in glass cases round the walls; while, in one distinguished cabinet, called the Golden chamber, you are shown, through a window, the skulls of a select few of the number. A picture in the choir represents St. Ursula, a bulky lady, surrounded by her virgins in white, landing at the port of Cologne.

We visited the Church of St. Peter, in which Rubens was christened, and saw the tomb of his father, who was buried here. The altar piece is his admirable composition of the crucifixion of St. Peter, which, after a transportation to Paris, is now restored to the place for which the artist designed it. It may fairly be considered one of his master-pieces.

Cologne, which has contributed several to the distinguished early artists of Germany, still possesses a number of picture-galleries and artists of celebrity — many more than we had time or inclination to visit. Pictures are like poetry, unless very excellent they are very uninteresting. Useful arts are *necessary*, and if we cannot find perfection in their productions one is

obliged to put up with mediocrity: but as arts which profess to amuse are purely gratuitous, one has a right to be as fastidious as one pleases in judging them, and to prefer going without them to admiring what is second rate. With this feeling I have forborne to fatigue you with descriptions of many very respectable collections which I have visited in my travels; suspecting that, highly as you value a respectable man, you never wish to see a respectable picture, or read a respectable poem.

With our Swiss companion, and a fat heavy merchant from Frankfort, who had accompanied the barge from Bonn, we accordingly visited some works of taste, certainly *more* than respectable in their style, though that style was a singular one. They were a collection of small wax models of characteristic figures, such as personifications of Misery, Avarice, Opulence, &c., coloured and executed with a truth and expression which I could not have imagined the wax capable of exhibiting. The artist, equally original with his performances, was an old paralytic canon of the cathedral, the *Herr Canonicus Hardy*, whom we found lodged,

with a housekeeper nearly equally aged, in a little wretched tenement. His study was littered with a few mass books, and tomes of Latin theology, half buried under pallets and brushes, mathematical instruments, and fragments of statues, bespeaking the old divine's *dilettanti* pursuits. The Canon, a little emaciated figure, with a countenance bespeaking genius, crowned by a nightcap, received us at first with an irritable impatience, stammering out "*Non, Messieurs — je demande pardon — les figures sont toutes vendues — je suis bien faché — mais je n'en ai plus.*" A little flattery, however, soon drew forth one, and then another, and then a third, till the old gentleman, something in the spirit of Horace's singers, became anxious to make the housekeeper bring forth his whole stock, which were ranged in his comfortless bed-room. The figure of misery, a haggard old man, with a scanty crust and a brown jug before him, was executed with a spirit and reality which were really astonishing; and the keen-looking Jew miser, counting his guineas was equally striking. A Flemish painter, Hogarth, or Wilkie could hardly have worked up the

feeling of the figure more impressively. The figures are small, and in neat gilt frames; and the old Canon was contented to demand two louis d'ors each, as a recompense for the immense labour with which they were evidently worked. The Frankfort dealer, who had a mind for a speculation in wax, offered to take a *gross* at a louis d'or and a half each; a proposal which the old housekeeper authoritatively forbade the Canon to accept: and when I was hesitating whether to purchase the two best figures, the merchant persuasively suggested that if I did not like to keep them I might unquestionably make 100 *per cent.* of my money in London. The old Canon showed us besides, through his microscope, a curious insect, which he had been the first to discover, and which had stood him in good stead on the occupation of Cologne by the French. Purely as a reward for his discovery, he had been exempted by an order of the French General from the obligation of quartering half a dozen soldiers who fell to his share in the billetting the troops on the towns-people.

LETTER XXX.

The Casinos to be found in every town of consequence, in Germany, are very rational establishments, fitted up with a commodious elegance, which make their resources doubly attractive. —The reading rooms are stocked with a profusion of journals, reviews, and pamphlets, literary and political, from all parts of Germany; besides the French, and sometimes English and Italian newspapers. There is a conversation room, where talkative quidnuncs may be relieved from the silence prescribed in the reading rooms, besides billiard tables and card rooms, and sometimes a good table d' hôte provided by a restaurateur of the establishment. The assembly rooms, which form part of the edifice, are only opened on occasions of balls and evening societies and are kept sacred from the fumes of tobacco, which frequently perfume

and tinge the other handsome apartments. In some the small minority of *non-smokers* have weight enough to procure a special removal of the journals for several hours every day into a room where the favourite herb is excluded. The casinos are supported by subscriptions — Noblesse and Bourgeoisie, excluding common tradesmen, being alike members. A foreign traveller finds easy access to them by means of his banker; and finds more sociable respectability, as well as more convenience and resources, than in the comfortless *Cafés* in France and the Netherlands, where a few political journals are to be inspected at the price of a cup of coffee or an ice.

The multitude of journals of all sizes, qualities, and characters, from all parts of Germany which load the tables of the casino, though they unquestionably bespeak an increasing diffusion of ideas, result in a great degree from the extent and endless division of the country — each little state and town sending forth its official sheet. Their merit to be sure is not quite upon a par with their number; but still though many of them are filled with

trite dull criticism, and insignificant details, they are so many subjects of occupation for the mind — and the patient Germans wade through them, their pipes in their mouths, with a diligence that exercises the faculties, and may produce a taste for better things. The two or three little gazettes of each petty metropolis are, in general, little more than collections of official notices and announcements from long titled authorities, promotions and conferrings of dignities, lists of strangers at the Inns, &c. without a word of original writing or interesting matter. Even the *Journal de Francfort* which has a sort of metropolitan character, which is written in French and has a wide circulation, is not much above this description. These sort of *Moniteurs* in miniature have naturally no interest or circulation beyond the state where they are published; and within that they are the only papers that circulate generally. The Casino presents a choice of better food, but that is necessarily for the use of the upper classes. The pastors, the peasants, the little townsmen and villagers have no access to it. A German peasant, though he can almost in-

variably read and write well, lolls over the beer-house table without any other occupation than his pipe or his chioppine of wine — I never saw a newspaper in his hands, and if he takes up the gazette of the little capital, it contains nothing more rousing to his intellect than a notice of death, the appointment of a bailiff, or an auction of fire wood. The first of these compositions, which daily crowd the papers, is so curious an instance of old-fashioned German formality that I send you a specimen at the end of this letter, translated as literally as the complex machinery of German sentences allow.

Do not suppose however, that in a country like Germany there are no well written journals — The literary ones come in shoals from the little focuses of letters in the north — and Stutgard and Tübingen in the south, contribute to the number. The papers which (to use a common phrase) make a noise and are to be considered as organs of political opinion, are about five or six, such as the New Rhenish Mercury, the Opposition Paper, the Rhenish Journal, &c. &c. These are *national* journals, conducted with ability, expressing boldly independent prin-

ciples, and devoted entirely to original discussion — They occupy themselves with the interests of the confederation, and the affairs of Germany at large, and comment boldly on the conduct of any Prince, when it appears materially to influence these — The rights of citizens and the value of representative constitutions are just now the perpetual and lively themes of all writers — They handle these subjects, as is natural with political tyros, ably, but somewhat theoretically — holding up however our constitution for imitation, with constant eulogies. — The much talked of Massenbach whose patriotism I fear is mainly influenced by his pocket, is an indefatigable pamphleteer, and an inflammatory discusser of the accustomed topics. — By way of frontispiece to one of his addresses he embodied his theory of a good constitution in a pyramidal temple, graduating from a democratical base to a monarchical apex. If his practice was as unobjectionable as his theory he would be the Solon of reformers.

The zealous journals of course resort to some liberal state for publication. Most of them appear under the mild governments of

Saxe Weimar, Saxe Gotha, Hesse Darmstadt, and Nassau; and they circulate freely in Baden, Wirtemberg, Hesse Darmstadt, and all the states near the Rhine, with the exception of Hesse Cassel — In Austria, Bavaria, and some other states, a standing order prohibits most of them — The Grand Duchy of Hesse has long been distinguished among the Rhenish states for the freedom of its press. The Grand Duke passes unnoticed almost any attacks on his government, and in the days of the subjugation of the Rhenish Princes to the French, many patriotic works not permitted to appear elsewhere, were brought to his states for publication; — he suppressed none but works specifically complained of by Napoleon. But an instance occurred the other day which sufficiently manifests how little the minor Princes can be considered sovereigns in their own states in matters which concern their more gigantic neighbours. The New Rhenish Mercury, one of the boldest and most popular journals of Germany, was published at Offenbach, in the Grand Duchy. — No sooner did this journal begin to discuss the affair of the King of Prussia and Colonel Massen-

bach, than it received an order of silence on that topic from the Grand Duke; not choosing to comply with which it sought refuge at Jena, in the Grand Duchy of Weimar, where it published in its first article an explanation of its removal. This circumstance speaks for itself. On the suggestion of the King of Prussia's *wishes*, by his Ambassador, what course was left to the diminutive sovereign but to sacrifice the liberty of his own press, rather than quarrel with so formidable a neighbour?

The freedom and boldness of his press continually involve the Grand Duke of Weimar in altercations with his despotic neighbours; but he refuses to alter the laws, and refers the dignified complainants to the regular remedies they afford. — He is a man of energy — with that weight and dignity which are conferred by talents and the respect of all Germans. The Grand Duke of Hesse is a good paternal sovereign with four times the territorial consequence of the former; but as his liberality is the result of good humour, rather than of political principle, it is more easily influenced by circumstances.

The literary and miscellaneous journals collect a large fund of motley matter. I cannot say much for the vivacity of their criticisms. The Germans say this is owing to their conscientiousness: that they present true, rather than florid pictures. Of this I am an incompetent judge. We English often figure copiously, and in pretty favourable colours, in these works. Minute details of all political transactions, accounts of our institutions, &c. are enlivened by biographies of Lord Byron, Walter Scott, &c., &c.; sometimes with selected *morceaux* from their new works, translations from the Edinburgh and other Reviews; the parliamentary *bons mots* of my Lord Castlereagh, and all the private histories of Watson senior and junior. The reports of visitors to our isle afford sometimes a *sauce piquante* to the miscellanies, one of which communicated to me the novel hints that English physicians always wear black, and sometimes swords; that all the Opposition eat boiled beef; and that a Tory dinner table is distinguished by little rolls, while the Whigs show their sturdiness by uncouth hunches of bread!! You see one may

gain some new lights on one's own country by visiting others.

The main respect in which the German journals are far, very far, behind ours is the want of that active, practical tone of remark and discussion on all subjects which comes home to every one's intellects, and keeps opinion and enquiry alive. This can, in fact, only be the result of that highly advanced state of information which it extends and keeps up. The German journals detail facts and heap together matter: but these are the rough materials of the workshop, which want moulding by the tools of intellect to purposes of practical entertainment or utility. Stated drily and coldly, as in the German journals, they fill the head with confused details, rather than sound conclusions. A worthy Baron of my acquaintance generally spends the whole morning in possessing himself of the contents of the Casino, till he becomes a heavy book of reference in newspaper lore: but, like many other books of reference, rarely musters two clear opinions on any subject. Any thing in the shape of the Edinburgh or Quarterly Review, the Times, or even

William Cobbett, would have cleared away a few of these mists.

German Form of announcing a Death.

"I hereby, as in duty bound, make known to all my friends and relations, that it has pleased the Providence of God, on the 30th of the last month of August, at four o'clock in the morning, to call to himself, in a joyful eternity, by means of a for-many-years-enduring painful disorder of the lungs, my dear wife Sophia, born ———, from ———, in the Rhingau, in the 46th year of her age, the sole surviving matrimonial daughter of the at-that-time-Electoral-Mayentzian-Bailiff's-clerk, Mr. ———, deceased. She died in my absence, (as I, for restoration of my own health, weakened by various untoward circumstances, and long-continued sittings at the business of my calling, was staying with my old father at Bensheim, to use the not-far-from-thence-removed baths of Auerbach, which this mournful event only permitted me to use a short time,) in the arms of my sister, provided with all holy sacraments, with the greatest firmness and resignation

to the will of God, and sooner and quicker than our excellent physician or herself conjectured. I lost in her a faithful wife; my five chiefly uneducated children a tender mother. I recommend the deceased to the prayers of my dear friends and relations; myself, with my children, to the lasting friendship and good wishes of the same. Convinced of their participation in the above, I decline all condolence, which could not diminish my just suffering, but only augment it.

" FRIEDR. ————,

" Grand Ducal Baden Exchequer Chancery Clerk."

LETTER XXXI.

We departed early in the morning for Aix-la-Chapelle — myself, the bulky merchant of Frankfort, a French merchant from Lyons, and a young German, whom I had before met at Stutgard, squeezed into a stout calêche, drawn by a couple of hardy troop horses, and driven by an old soldier of Napoleon, who had taken up the trade of *voiturier*. The fellow had been at the battle of Waterloo, and, in the course of much bragging of his exploits, encouraged by his mercantile compatriot, took out his watch, assuring me, with a triumphant air, "*Voila c'est un Anglais.*" The watch was certainly an English one, but whether he had taken it from the pocket of an Englishman on the field, as he asserted, is perhaps doubtful. The Lyonnese merchant, a shrewd conceited Frenchman, with the substantial air of a man of opulence, gene-

rally monopolised the conversation, of which I had the principal benefit, the Germans speaking little French, and the Frenchman of course knowing none but his own language. His range of loquacity was confined to the only two subjects on which he had two ideas—France and himself. In half an hour we were apprised that his firm was known all over the world; that his country-house and vineyards were the admiration of the department; his wife a "*superbe femme*," and the Mayor his "*meilleur ami.*" As to France, "*Ah voila ce qu' on appelle un beau pays. Qu'est ce que vous n'y trouvez pas? Vous avez la du blé, vous avez des fruits, vous avez des vignobles — enfin — vous avez tout.*" And turning to me, with triumphant satisfaction, "*Vous n'avez pas de vignes en Angleterre?* And then, with a commiserating shrug at our deficiency, "*Ah non il n'y a pas de pays comme la France.*" Every thing in France prospered. The King's speech had told them they were rich; and the allied troops were sure to be removed in the spring. All that was French, or connected with France, was to be held sa-

cred. If a word was dropped in disparagement of Buonaparte — "*Ah mais il faut convenir que c'etait un grand homme;*" or if the imbecility of the Bourbons was hinted at — "*Mais cependant ils sont de bons gens.*" As for Paris, and the Palais Royal, "*Le paradis sur la terre*" was the eternal climax with which he wound up all his extacies. "*Il n'y a qu'un Palais Royal dans le monde,*" he exclaimed, with a rapture that never dreamt how great a compliment he was paying the world. The *filles de joie* were so handsome and so modest — "*elles sont justement comme des femmes honnêtes. Ah il n'y a que les Francais qui aiment les femmes. A Paris on se marie rarement — c'est vrai — ce n'est pas la mode — Ah les Francais sont le seul peuple gallant — toutes les femmes aiment les Français.*" In this strain of voluble egotism he continued to amuse us the whole journey, not less by his vivacity and happy vanity, than by his displays of profound ignorance on every subject not French, or even Parisian.

Sometimes the old gentleman gave us some amusing particulars of the siege of

Lyons, in the defence of which he had taken a part, and had narrowly escaped the guillotine. He was at Lyons when the Duke of Tarentum and Monsieur repaired there to attempt to stop Buonaparte's progress from Elba to Paris. He saw the troops drawn up in the *Grande Place*, and reviewed by the Duke and Monsieur. The men had had three francs each given them; and it was hoped the exhortations of the Marshal would excite universal devotion to the cause. His Royal Highness and the Duke rode through the ranks again and again, and the Marshal, after repeated addresses, and exhausting every topic calculated to rally loyalty, called to the men to give a token of their attachment by saluting the Prince with *Vive le Roi.* Scarcely three voices broke the dismal silence. The Marshal turned away in despair, the tears streaming from his eyes — and the Count d'Artois and he shortly afterwards left Lyons. The gay Frenchman assured me that he, and almost all present, were moved to tears by this cruel scene. — A Colonel of cavalry on half pay, a friend of our companion's, resided near Lyons, with his wife, to whom he was

much attached. On hearing of Napoleon's approach, he let fall some hints of an intention of joining him, on which his wife indignantly broke forth—"*A ton age, mon ami,—et tu ne connois pas le chemin d'honneur? pense y bien. Si tu le quittes, tu ne me verras plus de ta vie.*" The Colonel, persuaded by his wife, fully resolved to serve his King, and left her with a vow never to forget her injunctions: but, on arriving at Lyons, the cries of *Vive l'Empereur*, and the sight of the *tricolor* cockade, were too much for his firmness; and neither his spouse, his vow, nor his honour had influence enough to prevent his flocking with his comrades to the standard of his old leader. This is a curious illustration of that invariable resignation to momentary impulses which forms the consistent inconsistency of the French character. Military glory, that vainest and most delusive of feelings, appears to be the only one to which they have ever been true.

The diverting vivacity and grace of the Frenchman, contrasted with the looby stupidity of the German merchant, who, in bad French, was opening a negotiation for

dealings in silk with the firm at Lyons, aided by a card in French and German, professing to transact all brokerage *au juste prix*, made up for the want of interest in the country we passed. My Stutgard acquaintance, a simple German youth, never took his eyes off the eternally narrating Frenchman; and when he occasionally caught the force of an exclamation or a description, testified his admiration by a burst of horse-laughter.

We stopped a few minutes at the little town of Bergheim, at an inn, to which the handsome sign of "*The Duke of Wellington*" gave a certain interest. While we were drinking chocolate, the Frenchman, aware of the notoriously good odour in which his nation is held by the majority of the King of Prussia's new subjects, was dissembling his country, and persuading the jovial landlord that there were no people under the sun to be compared to the Prussians. "*Je sais bien — vous n'aimez pas les Français — vous avez raison — ce sont des mechans — vous êtes tons pour les Prussiens dans ce pays ci — n'est ce pas?*" The landlord was startled, and stared at a predilection of which he

was so consciously innocent being thus forced on him, and, in spite of all his disposition to adopt whatever feelings were most agreeable to his guests, did not hesitate to avow, on being a little more pressed, that his own feelings, and those of the inhabitants of the town of Bergheim and the vicinity were as much the reverse as possible of those imputed to him. The Frenchman chuckled at the success of his irony, and winked at me, whispering "*Vous voyez comme les Français sont aimés.*"

The bias in favour of the French, which a traveller who observes any thing of the inhabitants, cannot fail to detect in every conversation at a table d'hôte in these provinces, is in a great degree attributed to the decline of the manufactures, which form one main occupation of the inhabitants. Buonaparte's system of exclusion had fostered these to the highest pitch of prosperity; and now the complaints of the fair politician at Bonn of their ruin are loud throughout the country, and continually find vent in the journals of the Netherlands. The productions of Aix-la-Chapelle, Verviers, Mountjoie, Cologne, &c. formerly spread over

all Germany and Russia — the draperies of Crefeld were seen in the Haram of Constantinople, and were especially patronised by Frederic of Prussia. They are now quite unable to compete with the manufactures of Birmingham, Wakefield, and Manchester, which inundate the country. Numberless manufactories consequently stand still, and large bodies of population are out of employ. During the Continental system, the country boasted no less than twenty-seven of Buonaparte's notable chemical manufactories for making beet-root a substitute for sugar — a trade, which in spite of its serviceableness in keeping up the luxuries of *compôtes* and coffee, when they were in imminent danger of being annihilated is, as you may suppose, little able to maintain itself against the influx of colonial produce.

The presence of the Prussian troops, who are stationed in every town, by no means conciliates the good will of the people. Here, as elsewhere, they are complained of as haughty, vain, and tyrannical. At Cologne they are very unpopular. The officers often behave imperiously — a little while ago no

one dared to speak a word of French in their hearing. — The removal of almost all the native *employés* in the provinces, and the substitution of Prussians, also causes discontent — although with some few exceptions, the French laws and systems which had so importantly improved on the German ones, are left by the government nearly as they were found — a policy also wisely adopted in the Bavarian and Hessian provinces which comprise the remainder of the reconquests of Germany from the French empire. But as yet every thing in these provinces appears on a provisional and temporary footing — it is to be hoped the discontents are so too. — All are looking with expectation to the sort of diet which the Prince Chancellor Hardenberg is shortly to hold at Coblentz, for the purpose of organising the constitution of this large and valuable limb of the gigantic Prussian empire — a possession which, besides being incomparably richer than any thing that the King of Prussia possesses elsewhere, gives him a footing in the heart of Europe and a frontier on France. His Silesian provinces penetrate into the heart

of Austria; and with the exception of about fifteen or twenty intervening leagues which are all that separate Rhenish and Westphalian Prussia from Old Brandenburg, the kingdom of Prussia now connects France with Russia! This excessive aggrandisement is thought favourable to the balance of power—but if any but graduated diplomatists may presume to form an opinion on that vast subject, surely the political equilibrium is equally injured by Brobdignags and Lilliputs. The King of Prussia, by side of his royal neighbours, the sovereigns of Lippe-Waldeck, Hesse-Homburg, &c. looks like the Irish Giant in company with Lady Morgan—but there are symmetry and rational proportion in neither—and the Continent is as likely to suffer from being overrun by two or three immoderately sized sovereigns, as from the miserable stagnation of intellect and frittering of character in the principalities of three leagues by two.

We stopped to dine at Juliers, a little town whose ample ditches and fortifications, announce one of the strongest fortresses of the Prussian provinces. It is garrisoned by

about 3000 Prussian troops, who were at parade as we passed.

We arrived late at Aix-la-Chapelle — The road from Juliers runs through a fine corn country, well wooded, and picturesquely fertile.

LETTER XXXII.

Aix-la-Chapelle stands in a fertile bowl, surrounded by bold hills, on descending from which, either on the road from Liege or from Juliers, the slated roofs and minarets of the *Hotel de Ville*, and the grotesque dome of the cathedral, give to the old Imperial City an air of imposing dignity. On entering it you find it, however, far from a handsome town, according to the modern acceptation of the phrase — nor is the interest of antiquity united with any of that architectural curiosity, which give the great cities of the Netherlands so striking a character. The city, which is by no means large, is as usual surrounded by a thick rampart, now half in decay, with small Roman towers at nearly equal distances. Below the ramparts are agreeable shrubberies and gardens, chiefly the work of the French, and which form favourite

promenades to the company of the Bathing-Place.

Our visit in the summer, when the place was overflowing with company, gave us some idea of the mode of life of the diversified groupes who were drinking deeper of its waters and amusements than ourselves: both of which have no small resemblance to those of similar scenes in England. Gaiety has, however, a more decided character; pleasure is more the avowed business of every body; and if *ennui* may be the motive of as many visits to this place, as to similar ones in Great Britain, the remedy here appears more successful; for you can rarely read in a single countenance, as you so often may in the libraries of Brighton or Cheltenham, the inveterate disease of which persons come to be cured. The system of the day commences with a bath, taken early, for about half an hour. After breakfast follow excursions in the environs, the walks in the gardens, visits to the *cafés* and billiard-rooms, and, above all, the pleasures of the Redoubt, or Grand Saloon, which occupy the gay world till dinner, at two or three. This last-men-

tioned place of rendezvous is the great centre of attraction; and with the exception of much more gaiety, more avowed vice, and the absence of all pretence at rational resources, acts the part of the library at an English watering-place. The Redoubt is a large handsome building, the ground floor open with a colonnade in front, appropriated to print, toy-shops, &c. A wide stair-case conducts to the first-floor, where, after depositing your hat and stick with the *gens d'armes* at the door, you enter the Grand Saloon — a splendid room, with a carved cieling, and lined with mirrors. On one side a crowd of motley, but well-dressed and gay-looking persons, (I regret to say, of both sexes,) are pressing over each other's heads, round two large banks of *Rouge et Noir*. An anxious silence reigns, only interrupted by the rattling of the roulette, the clink of the Napoleons and francs, and the titters and jokes of the few whose speculations are a matter of mere frolic. The play is frequently very high, but the bank does not refuse to sweep in a solitary franc. Pretty, interesting women were putting down their

Napoleons, and seeing them swept away, or drawing them in doubled, with a *sang froid* which showed they were no novices in their employment.

A Russian officer of my acquaintance was subject, like many of his countrymen whom I have known, to the infatuation of play in a most ridiculous excess. His distrust of himself, under the assailments which he anticipated at a place like Aix-la-Chapelle, had induced him to take the prudent precaution of paying in advance at his hotel for his board and lodging, and at the bathing-house for his baths, for the time he intended to stay. The remaining contents of his purse he thought fairly his own; and he went of course to the table all the gayer for the sort of licence he had taken of his conscience. On fortune showing him a few favours, he came to me, in high spirits, with a purse full of Napoleons, and a resolute determination to keep them by venturing no more: but a gamester can no more be stationary than the tide of a river, and in the evening he was put out of suspense

by having not a Napoleon left, and nothing to console himself but congratulation on his foresight, and the excellent supper which was the fruit of it.

Between four and five o'clock, groupes of the *beau monde* repair to the Louisberg —a bold sandy hill, rising abruptly just above the ramparts of the town, the view from which overlooks the city and the rich valley beneath, and stretches over the neighbouring hills and fertile pastures, to a range of even mountains which bound the horizon towards Germany. The scene of attraction on the mountain is a large tavern, with a splendid saloon, commanding a noble prospect. Music, dancing, smoking, tea-drinking, walks in the gardens, &c., occupy the various descriptions of guests; and the scene has few features of difference from our cockney rendezvous near town, except the characters of the parties, who, instead of being worthy cits, with fat spouses, are often a gay assemblage of Counts, Barons, &c. &c. of various nations and qualities.

During the continuance of the season

there is generally a company of German players at Aix-la-Chapelle, and the company hastily return from the Louisberg to the theatre. The building is small, and by no means handsome. An opera was given the night I was there, the music of which was agreeable, but the actors by no means extraordinary.

The Cathedral of Aix is interesting for its history, and its rude specimens of early Saxon architecture: but has neither beauty nor grandeur to recommend it. The quaint old dome, which comprehends the whole edifice, except the light Gothic choir of a later date, is a venerable relic of the old minster with which Charlemagne adorned his native city. It was consecrated by Pope Leo III. in 804, with a ceremony worthy of its splendour. Three hundred and sixty-five Archbishops and Bishops were to be present at the solemnity; but unluckily two were missing, and there is no knowing what might have resulted if two reverend prelates of Tongres, long ago dead and buried at Maestricht, had not been so kind as to walk out of their graves and supply the vacant seats at the cere-

mony. Some of the variegated marble pillars which adorned the old edifice are now returned from their temporary visit to Paris, and are shown with the curiosities of the church. Under the centre of the dome repose the ashes of the great Charles, with the simple but impressive inscription on the pavement — *Carolo Magno.* Immediately above hangs an immense circular sort of chandelier in the shape of a crown, composed of silver and brass — a present to the church from Frederic the Great, called Charlemagne's crown.

The absence of the sacristan and his key deprived us of the gratification of admiring the choice assortment of relics; among which are the *soi-disans* neck and arm-bones of Charlemagne, his hunting-horn and a golden cross which he is said to have worn. The religious treasures which we thus missed inspecting, appear to tax the credulity of good Catholics with even more than usual severity. Our guide at the Cathedral assured us, that if we could but wait an hour we should have the felicity of seeing the girdle of the Virgin, a bit of the cord that served to bind our Sa-

viour, a fragment of Aaron's rod, and a morsel of the manna of the desert. The possession of these treasures, which are preserved in a costly case, and exposed periodically to the wondering multitude, formerly made Aix-la-Chapelle the favourite resort of pilgrims from all parts of Europe. An old chronicle relates that in 1490 above 140,000 visited the relics in one day; and that, at the end of the ceremony, the donation-box was found to contain 80,000 florins. The miserable morbid-looking wretches scattered about before images and altars on their knees in every corner of the church, seemed to remind one that the Catholics of the nineteenth century were not so much advanced beyond those of the fifteenth as, for the sake of humanity, one might wish. Some were kneeling, with extended arms, before a saint, or a little figure of the Virgin, dizened out in flowers and lace, with an air of vacant ignorance and misery, perhaps feeling an undefined consolation in their blind devotions. Others were mechanically gabbling over their *Ave Marias*, staring around them all the while; and so

veral wretched objects left their prayers to crowd round us with the importunities of hunger and misery. Each ragged supplicant has his favourite altar or image, which he rarely varies, and where you are sure of finding him on his knees, with his mass-book in his hand, half an hour before mass, *salut*, and vespers, and sometimes almost throughout the day. The more conscientious, or those who wish to do neither too much nor too little, are seen counting their *Ave Marias* and *Benedicites* by their rosary.

The poor wretches who pass their existence in the aisles, many for want of any other home, seem to find their only comfort in the treasures and magnificence of the church. They take as much pride in describing or pointing them out to you, as if they were their own property—and will relate the sufferings and pillagings which their cathedral has undergone, with as lively a regret as if they had deprived them of so many personal comforts. If you talk to them, they are ignorant and confiding to the last degree. They never attempt to give you any other account of their faith in

this or that miracle or relic than that they were brought up in it — that their father believed before them, and that is enough for them.

This is the sort of scene which Catholic churches generally present; and though this assemblage of slavish superstition and beggary is ill-assorted with the pomp of the ceremonies and the grandeur of the buildings, it perhaps, on the whole, heightens the strong undefinable and mixed impression which a Catholic Church never fails to make on a stranger. The contrast of sublimity and wretchedness, of pomp and meanness, is very striking. Without the slightest feeling of intolerance for these multitudes, they present to one the touching spectacle of so many victims of error, deluded by the gaudy ceremonies of a spiritless worship. All that is poetical, solemn, and impressive in religious rites, seems here abused to the purpose of riveting the chains of ignorance, and gilding folly and darkness with the brightest illusions. The pealings of the organ, the voices of the choir, the triumphs of the arts, appear not so much employed to

elevate the devotions of beings capable of feeling them, as to produce ignorant awe in the multitude, and to clothe a delusive farce with imposing stage effect.

The Priests of the Catholic churches, in Germany and the Netherlands, with whom I have formed acquaintance, I have in general found heavy, besotted, beings; who drudge on in their calling, selfish, grumbling, and without a spark of intellectual life beyond a low cunning, if that can be called so. One of the number, whose abode I will not mention, was a lively exception to the *animal* stupidity of this character. He lived in a little shabby house, leaning against the buttresses of the cathedral. To see the Reverend man at the altar, his demure face suited to his canonicals, and going through the solemn pantomime with a pompous gravity, you would have thought him the very saint of orthodoxy — but in his parlour we found him the gayest of wags, the most lax of theologians, and one of the most entertaining and easy fellows we ever met with. The arch leer of his eye seemed to confess him too knowing for his blind vocation —

and that a joke, or a pretty girl, were as much in estimation with him as a father or a tenet. He ordered out a bottle of his best ale, which was served up by a very pretty housekeeper — and when a German friend joked him on his interesting companion, he put on a half-sly, half-sanctified look, turning indifferently to another subject, as if his reputation on such a matter was not the precise point on which he was most desirous of standing clear with us. His conversation was interlarded with scraps of Monkish Latin, sometimes mystical, sometimes bordering on indecorum — and when our English pronunciation of the vowels was spoken of as being different from that of the rest of Europe, he accounted for it with a chuckling smile — "Ah, that was only a trick of the Reformers — before their time you pronounced them like other people, but they wished to keep the common people in the dark, and so they altered the sound of the vowels, that they might not understand their own language!" I could not help smiling at the worthy Catholic's satisfaction, with his whimsical

theory, so strictly borrowed from the tactics of his own church.

Our Reverend guide left us to prepare for the *salut* — but anxious that we should have a good view of the little image of Our Saviour, used at the service, which he assured us was solid gold, he placed us in a corner of the choir opposite the altar, promising when he held it up to the congregation, to hold it before us long enough to ensure a full inspection. When he marched solemnly up to the altar, with the two other Priests, he turned his eye to the appointed rendezvous and recognised us with a familiar nod and wink. His occupation in his sacred office did not make him forget his promise; and when the organ was sounding, the bells ringing, the incense fuming, and the priest held up the image to the gazing multitude, with an air of fervent piety, he turned it round to us, and held it for some seconds, eyeing us with a look that meant to ask what we thought of it. The image was small and what such images usually are, except that it was of solid gold — but the manner in which the priest thus

mixed up his office of ciceroni with his holy functions struck us as very curious. While the admiring crowds thought him rapt in the solemnity of his office, he was making an arrangement for the gratification of a traveller's curiosity with the hope of increasing his fee a few francs by his zeal. Lest we might not be at home in the etiquette of accompanying our *douceurs* with the phrase "*pour les pauvres,*" which the delicacy of a Catholic Priest cannot resist, our shrewd friend gave us some very explicit hints — "*Pour moi tout ce que je fais c'est pour les pauvres — vous savez bien — il faut absolument soigner les pauvres — nous en avons tant.*" These hints were not lost upon us; and when we pressed a few francs into his hand we did not omit the talismanic words which enabled him to receive our money with as unembarrassed a dignity as if he had literally intended every sou, *pour les pauvres.*

The lofty Hotel de Ville, with its antique minarets, and its roof studded with diminutive windows, crowns with a venerable dignity the Grande Place of the town — a bustling square, adorned by an immense

bronze basin and fountain in the centre, surmounted by an antique bronze statue of Charlemagne, fully accoutred. Two large black eagles flap their metal wings on pedestals by side of the fountain. The Monarch and the eagles turn their heads towards the Hotel de Ville — the ancient Palace in which Charles was born. The statue was honoured by the French with a visit to Paris, among the other works of art. The modern Prussian eagle now figures over the door of the Hotel, announcing the Police and Municipal Offices of the Prussian Regency, and perking his upstart head in the face of the venerable birds who have reigned for centuries. We entered the hotel by a spacious hall, with vaulted roofs, and grotesquely carved and painted walls. A wide stair-case conducted us to the Grand Saloon, where the memorable Congress was held which concluded the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748. An immense well-executed picture represents the whole *corps diplomatique*, with their secretaries in full costume, at the deliberative table, to the number of about thirty. *Le Chevalier Robinson*, meaning Sir

Thomas Robinson, and Lord Sandwich, were pointed out to us as our plenipotentiaries; and Maria Theresa's famous minister, the Prince of Kaunitz, as that of Austria. The separate portraits of the different ambassadors also adorn the room: but that of the French ambassador is singularly enough absent, Louis XV. having, as it is said, absolutely declined to furnish it, in consequence of his dissatisfaction at the peace. The arms of the different kingdoms are represented on a small shield attached to the costume of each ambassador: but the *fleur de lis*, the emblem of the Bourbons, and which is common to the arms of England, France, Spain, and other Sovereigns, has been invariably erased, with great care, by the revolutionary French, and a black daub left in its place — a curious instance of the trifles to which political animosity often attaches importance. Handsome portraits of Maria Theresa, and her husband Francis, and Joseph II., also hang on the walls, once their own, but now dirty and neglected — while a glittering full length representation of His Prussian Majesty, protected by a green

silk curtain, occupies one end of the saloon in all the blooming dignity of a Sovereign in possession.

As is naturally often the case in towns on frontiers, or which have been subject to changes of masters, the people of Aix-la-Chapelle speak many languages, and none well. At Cologne they speak simply a coarse vulgar German, which degenerates in approaching the flats of Holland: but at *Achen*, bad German, bad French, some Dutch and Flemish, (bad or good I know not,) and a mixture of the *Walloon* dialect, of which you hear more at Liege, conspire to form a Babel of harmonious diversity. If you ask a question in French, the person you address probably only speaks German. If you address the next in German, he perhaps answers in French. German is, upon the whole, however, the language which you are most sure of finding useful; and if its re-Germanised condition is permanent, a few years will probably make Aix-la-Chapelle completely *Achen;* and the next generation may know as little of French as some of the juniors of the present do of German. In

such a case it is to be hoped that habit and wise administration may have gained for the Prussian government a popularity which it as yet wants.

These hasty epistolary communications are now probably to your great relief brought to a close. The scenes of the Netherlands are familiar to you — and from necessity I ran through them too rapidly, even for a description equally superficial with the preceding sketches. Waterloo has been exhausted, and though it is hardly necessary to say I visited it, I am unwilling to add one to the number of the prose-men and verse-men who have done their best to render the noblest of subjects common-place — And as for the cathedrals, the antique cities, the galleries, the fertile flats, and the gay jovial inhabitants of Belgium; circumstances rather than free choice have compelled me to postpone them to the sands, the ceremonies, and the heavy good-humour of Germany, beyond the Rhine.

THE END.

Printed by A. Strahan,
Printers-Street, London.





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